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A MONTHLY FOR ENGLISH CLASSES PUBLISHED BY SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES



JOHNNY APPLESEED . A Lithograph by William Gropper

MARCH, 1949 . VOLUME 1 . NUMBER 6

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you and LITERARY CAVALCADE, a Magazine for High School English Classes Published Monthly During the School Year. One of the SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES.

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#### **OUR FRONT COVER**



William Gropper, you will remember, drew the lithograph of Joe Magarac that illustrated the cover of our November, 1949, issue. Folklore is a favorite subject on Mr. Gropper's sketch pad, as the lithograph of Johnny Appleseed shows, and Johnny is admirably suited to

Chucklebait\_

the artist's talents. Clad in a garment made of an old coffee-sack, in which he cut holes for his head and arms, and a pasteboard hat with an immense peak in front, Johnny roamed barefoot over the Territory of Ohio in the first half of the last century, with a sack of appleseeds on his back, planting them in all the pleasant places he thought they would grow. His labors literally bore fruit over a hundred thousand square miles. Homeless and ragged, Johnny trod the earth with bare feet, intent only on making the wilderness beautiful. The lithograph on our cover is reproduced through the courtesy of Associated American Artists.



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**Back Cover** 

The battle was over and she had lost . . .

but it was defeat at its sweetest By Jerome Brondfield Illustrated by William Rose

**Transfer Point** 

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HE'D asked him if he'd need any help getting dressed, but he'd said no, not even with his cuff links or bow tie; so when he came grinning into the living room, Jane Willis just sort of stopped breathing for a moment.

"Well, how do I look, Mom?"

After a while her breathing started again automatically, but the shock now was transferred to her eyes and face in such a way that she could almost feel it, or touch it, like something that could be brushed away.

"Well?" he said again.
"Oh, Bill," she said. "Bill, you look just wonderful!" Except that wonderful was hardly the word. Not then. If she'd ever imagined her son's first tuxedo was going to be such an emotional shock



she would have prepared herself for it, would have made her anticipation serve as a bulwark against what was hitting her now with almost brutal force. But that kind of anticipation had been farthest from her thoughts . . .

"Turn around, Bill," she said, and he did so, moving his solid six feet with an easy grace. He was still grinning, pleased with himself, but he wore his pleasure the way he wore the tuxedonaturally, rightfully, without the slightest indication of not belonging.

She ran her hand down the wide satin grosgrain lapels, fingered the cornflower blue boutonniere. The doublebreasted jacket made his magnificent shoulders look even broader.

It was clear to her, of course, why this moment had broken upon her with such impact and with so little warning. As crazily much as she loved this boy of hers, she'd never quite got over the disappointment of not having had a daughter. She'd never remarried when Tom died, and bringing up Bill had been a constant series of comparisons and drawing of parallels. . . . Of imagining the time when she'd have taken a daughter to her first dancing lesson. . . . Of seeing her go off to her first party. . . . Of meeting her first date. . . . Of sharing the thrill of shopping for the first formal gown. She wished that she'd gone with Bill for the tuxedo. . .

All that and more had flitted dreamily into and out of her thoughts during the years Bill was growing up. And so she'd missed the boy's own progress.

Not that there had been a lack of guidance and companionship, but the progression of events simply had failed to impress her the way they probably would have with a daughter.

Yet how strange and almost unnatural not to have known it was coming! He was going to be seventeen next week. He was big for his age.

She'd seen him, strong and assured, on the football field and basketball court. Had listened to and read the praise that was heaped upon him.

No, she told herself determinedly. She couldn't let this new line of reasoning fool her. She mustn't let something like a first tuxedo cloud the issue. At seventeen a girl would be grown up. Her mind would be more mature. A formal date would be vastly more important, a much more cherished vignette of life. Why, at seventeen a girl was almost—ready for serious romance.

But this boy, this lanky mechanism of perpetual laughter and joy, could hardly be anything except what he appeared to be. In two or three years, maybe, if it were possible to apply the yardstick of years to measure such things. . . .

She completed her inspection by pulling the pointed ends of his white handkerchief another quarter of an inch out of his breast pocket. "This is the third time you're dating Marge Chalmers, isn't it?" she asked.

He nodded and sat down in the big chair, tossing one leg over the side. He had a few minutes to kill.

"What's she like, Bill?" she said "You've never told me, you know."

He smiled across at her. "Oh, she's quite nice, Mom. I'll bring her around some time soon. You'll like her. Swell sense of humor and a pip of a tennis player."

"Pretty?"

He cocked his head reflectively.

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#### About the Author . . .

• Jerome Brondfield is a graduate of Glenville H.S. (Cleveland) and Ohio State University (class of '36). He was a sports writer for several newspapers in Ohio before joining the New York bureau of the Associated Press, where he wrote features, and is now a writer of documentary film scripts for RKO Pathe. He writes fiction "on the side." His friends don't know where he finds the time, but he explains that he works out a story carefully in his mind, then puts it down rapidly.

#### 

"Well-not beautiful if that's what you mean, but attractive enough."

She pouted exaggeratedly. "The handsomest boy in town ought to rate the most beautiful girl."

"Thanks," he grinned, "but I'll settle for Marge. She's got plenty of sense and a lot of balance."

"Balance?" she asked. "How do you mean?"

"I couldn't really explain. You'll have to take my word that it means a lot."

She wished he hadn't said that. She wished he'd simply said that Marge was cute and lots of fun and liked to drink malts down at the Varsity Shop. Why, instead, should a seventeen-year-old boy be so candidly aware that his date to the biggest dance of the year wasn't beautiful? And why should he speak of something so abstract as "balance"?

She didn't search her mind for the answers, because she was afraid—afraid that the proof of what she was battling against was piling up too quickly, much more quickly than she was prepared to handle and accept it. She was still half convinced that he was only playing at manhood, the way they'd been doing the last couple of

years when she'd slip him the money in a restaurant to pay the check, or when he'd march up to the box office to buy the theatre tickets.

He was saying something about the car: "I think I'd better take it in tomorrow for that brake job. We oughtn't to put it off."

"Of course not," she replied absently, her eyes never leaving his face. It was wonderful the way he looked so much like Tom. She had a picture of Tom when he was twenty. There was hardly any difference.

He glanced at his watch. "I better be going." He uncoiled himself from the chair, and she got up too. She'd always made a little ritual of kissing him lightly whenever he went out at night on a date. A sort of protective, sheltering gesture, as though she'd be thinking of him, watching over him even though they were apart. It was something they both sensed without the binding adjunct of words.

She stood with her hands on his elbows, holding him off at arm's length. "Yes," she said with very apparent satisfaction, "you're going to be the handsomest boy at the dance."

He smiled down at her softly, and she started to reach up to bring his head down for the kiss, just as she always did. But she never got beyond the first impulse of motion. Suddenly she discovered the procedure being altered as his two hands reached out and enclosed her face, one on each side. She felt their firmness and strength, and they arrested all further movement on her part.

"I don't want you ever to worry about anything," he said slowly.

Then he was drawing her face up to meet his, tenderly, yet inexorably, in complete command of the moment. The last thing Jane Willis noticed before she closed her eyes was the line of his

Then he kissed her, and for the second time that night she stopped breathing. She opened her eyes to look at him, and in one wonderful instant saw it all—the full, magical transfer of the protection and the security. . . .

She knew then that the battle-if battle it was—was over, and she had lost. She had lost but it was all right. This was defeat at its sweetest.

"Good night, Mom," he said softly.
"Have fun," she smiled.

She watched him go down the front steps and walk to the car parked in the driveway. She didn't mind the tears that welled up. In fact, they felt good.

"Handsomest man at the dance," she whispered. "Handsomest man. . . ."

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How a case of Sinatra Plague was cured with the Ladd shakes and the Crosby trembles

By H. Allen Smith

HAVE refrained, up to now, from writing much of anything about my own children. Now they are all but grown, and they can counterpunch pretty well and know the uses of insult and are thus prepared for social intercourse on an adult plane. I can write about them and they will not be wounded any more severely than other people about whom I write.

So it is that my vagrant typewriter and I choose, at this point, to tell a story concerned with the Sinatra daffiness. Frank Sinatra is still around, still doing well for himself and punching the right people, but much of the hysteria has waned and it is possible nowadays for him to appear in public with a good chance that he won't have his suspenders jerked off by his juvenile admirers.

The world knows how the Sinatra Plague swept the United States and possessions a few years ago, seizing as its victims those girls who were on the very doorstep of womanhood, addling the contents of their brainpans and confusing their tongues. To my knowledge I am the only parent among hundreds of thousands who whipped the thing without recourse to chloroform or a baseball bat.

The disease hit my house when my daughter was fourteen; she and her little group of girl friends took down with the murrain and stayed semiconscious for months. When Frankie's voice came over the radio other members of the family were not permitted to speak, whisper, or use the sign language; no one was allowed to move around, scratch himself, or belch.

I made the error once of uttering a disparaging remark about Mr. Sinatra. I didn't say I thought he looked like an ailing toad-frog. I simply remarked that I didn't think he was particularly handsome. Five girls, including my daugh-



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lt good. ce," she ter, quit speaking to me for three weeks. I regained my standing only through an abject confession of ignorant error.

When Sinatra-time arrived those girls would issue their demand for sepulchral silence ten minutes before The Voice arrived in the room. They'd sit and listen and pretend to swoon with each bar of music, as was the fashion. When he did little tricks with his larynx they'd drop back into their chairs, roll their eyes up corpse-fashion, and go limp.

The walls of their room were converted into fantastic galleries. They clipped every interview, feature story, gossip item, and picture of their hero from newspapers and magazines, and these they glued to the walls. One of the girls had a blowup of his head fastened to the ceiling directly over her bed so that he would be gazing down at her when she awoke each morning.

Their conversations were of nothing else, and the telephone talk was both marvelous and maddening. "He" and "Him" meant but one person. In the midst of this pestilence circumstances arose which, in the end, gave me an opportunity to rid my house of the bug. I moved to Hollywood, having been engaged to stare at walls for Paramount. I put my daughter in school at Azusa and she was permitted to come in to Hollywood for occasional week ends.

Sinatra had just recently become a resident of Hollywood. I had never seen one of his broadcasts but I had heard that they were screwy affairs, so I arranged to risk life and limb by attending one at the CBS Playhouse on Vine Street. A few days before the broadcast I met Marc Connelly and he told me he was working on a motion-picture story based on the Sinatra legend. Mr. Connelly mentioned the fact that he had never seen Sinatra, nor had he ever heard the guy sing. I asked him to go along with me to the broadcast.

We arrived at the theater early in the afternoon to find the germ carriers lined up out front. They were in double file and the line stretched two blocks down the street. We talked to some of these girls and found that most of them had been on line since eight o'clock that morning, though they wouldn't be admitted to the theater until fifteen minutes before six in the evening. Among them we found a group of Chinese bobby-sockers. They called themselves "The Five" and they were dedicated to the uninhibited worship of Frankie. They told us that they had bought a present for their Frankie that very day. It was a handkerchief and it

had already been sent in to him. They enclosed a note with it which said:

"Please, Frankie, wear this handkerchief in your coat pocket for us today. But after today we don't want you to wear it in your pocket. We want you to blow your nose on it."

Mr. Connelly and I went into the empty theater and took seats for the rehearsal, during which Mr. Connelly had opportunity to observe the singer in action. Then we adjourned to the Brown Derby to talk it over, returning to the theater as time for the broadcast drew near. We took seats in the front row where it would be convenient for us to turn around and watch the faces of the audience.

They didn't open the front doors and keep them open. They let the afflicted girls enter in waves-about thirty to a wave. That in itself was a spectacle worth seeing. There we sat, alone in the quiet auditorium. A burst of shrieks signaled the entrance of the first demented wave, and wave is the word. Half of the girls in that first wave scorned use of the aisles and came right down the center of the auditorium. It was the only time in my life that I have ever seen people run at full speed across the tops of theater seats. The race was for the first row and not a girl was killed or maimed. In a moment Mr. Connelly and I were surrounded by babbling, chattering, excited sub-females. Most of them carried autograph books and a couple grabbed Mr. Connelly.

"Are you connected with him?" they demanded.

"With whom?" asked Mr. Connelly. "Frankie!" they cried. "Who else?"

"No, I'm sorry," said Mr. Connelly. That was all the attention we got. Had we been connected in some way with Frankie, had we been clients, say, of the same advertising agency which had Frankie's sponsor for a client, then we'd have been important and our names would have gone into the autograph books.

The curtain went up about five minutes to six, and somebody introduced the band leader and then Frankie came on-stage. The girls screeched like passengers on an exploding steamboat and Frankie turned his face toward them. He smiled, ever so wistfully. They shrieked three times as vigorously. All during the show that guy had only to glance out at the audience to send those girls into spasms. The kids in the front row fastened their chins over the lip of the stage, fastened their eyes on Frankie and never once took them off. Sledge hammers couldn't have moved them.



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We sat through the broadcast, listened to the squeals and whinnies, and when it was over we started out by way of the stage entrance. Backstage I saw Sinatra in a corner writing with a pen and with him was George Evans, his press agent. I knew Evans from New York and went over and asked him, in a moment of weakness, if I could get an autographed picture for my daughter. The Voice obliged and I mailed the thing out to school.

I should have known better. That picture sent her temperature to a new high, aggravating the miasma to a point where its chief symptoms were loss of appetite and chronic trance.

Something had to be done about it. I was having my shoes shined on the Paramount lot one afternoon when George Brown came along with a couple of ladies and introduced them. I was interested in one of them more than the other, for she was Sue Carol, wife of Alan Ladd. I knew that Alan Ladd was the Number Two man in the affections of my daughter and all her friends. He had been top man before Frankie came along and he was still up there close in second place. I explained this state of affairs to Mrs. Ladd and made a proposition which she accepted.

The following week end Nancy came in from Azusa, and on Saturday morning I took her on a tour of the Paramount studio. She met a number of picture stars and was reasonably impressed, and grateful to me, and we went home early in the afternoon. Then I told her that I had to make a business call on a producer and she could go along. She said she was tired and that she didn't care particularly about meeting any producers but that if I wanted her to go, she would go. She asked me the name of the producer we were going to meet and I couldn't think of anything to say except Sistrom.

We drove out Los Feliz Boulevard and up Rufus Blair's street and stopped in front of a house. As we went up the sidewalk I saw Sue Carol open the front door. I took a few steps ahead, winked at Mrs. Ladd, and said loudly, "Mrs. Sistrom, this is Nancy."

"Mrs. Sistrom" welcomed us and led us into the living room where we stood talking for a minute or two.

Then into the room came this guy. He had on nothing but a pair of sneakers and swimming trunks. Nancy turned around and looked at him and grabbed her face with her hands and started making noises in her throat as though she had swallowed fifteen cents' worth of bubble gum.

I led her over to a chair and eased her into it. She hadn't taken her eyes off Mr. Ladd. It turned out that he is a shy sort of person, that he was almost as embarrassed as Nancy, that he didn't know what to say, what to talk about. He got into a chair opposite Nancy, keeping his eyes averted from her, and

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finally said, "Let's have something cool." I asked Nancy what she would like to have and she gurgled unintelligibly and I ordered a coke for her. Mrs. Ladd went to get them.

We sat there in silence for a while, then Mr. Ladd and I started talking about motion pictures and the Army. Occasionally he would steal a glance at the cataleptic creature opposite him, then quickly look away. Mrs. Ladd and the drinks arrived. Mr. Ladd picked a glass off the tray, stood up, walked over to Miss Smith, held it out, and said:

"Here you are, Nancy."

She took it with a trembling hand. She looked into his face and said:

"I've got friends back in New York who're just gonna *die* when they hear this!"

Mr. Ladd retreated to his chair. Mrs. Ladd went upstairs and got the baby and brought it down. Nancy asked if she might touch it. Permission granted. She touched it. She then managed to summon sufficient parts of speech to say that it was the sweetest, prettiest, loveliest, most beautiful baby she had ever seen in her life.

At length we decided to go, and as we moved toward the door Mr. Ladd got up and said for us to wait a few minutes. He went into the dining room, got a photograph of himself, and wrote something on it for Nancy—something about thanks for coming and to come back again soon.

I took her by the arm and led her back to the street, and driving home she sat with a blank look in her eyes. I took her up to the apartment. All she had to say to me, repeated over and over as though addressing God, was, "Oh, thank you! Thank you!"

Her mother had to take her shopping, but it was an hour or so before her knees were steady enough for routine walking. She just sat and quoted the words he had spoken to her.

"'Here you are, Nancy! 'Here you are, Nancy,' That's what he said. To me. In person. Mother, he said, 'Here you are, Nancy.' He used my name. 'Here you are, Nancy.' In person! Oh, you don't realize what it means! You can't understand what has happened to me! Back home we always said the one thing we wanted to see most of all in this life was Alan Ladd stripped to the waist. And there he was; In the flesh! 'Here you are, Nancy.'"

I thought of calling Dr. Harry Cagney and having him operate, but after a while she seemed to improve slightly. That evening a miracle bloomed—she completely forgot to tune in Frankie's

#### About the author . . .

• H. Allen Smith is a newspaperman with a flair for humor who left daily journalism when he discovered he could earn more by putting into books whatever came into his head. In 1929, after working on papers around the country, he landed in New York with \$10. He was then 21. Two days later he was hired by the United Press as a feature writer. Later he joined the N. Y. World-Telegram and built a reputation as the "screwball's Boswell." With his book Low Man on a Totem Pole, Smith flowered as a best-selling humorist. Smith's formal schooling is rather sketchy and he claims that he received his real education in newspaper offices and from books that he read after he was old enough to know why he was reading.

to the top

radio program. She was gone, gone into another world. Her report card for the following month was a fright. Her letters contained nothing but Alan Ladd talk.

Something had to be done about it. The next time she came in to Hollywood I took her again to Paramount. We went on the set of Going My Way. Bing was there, garbed in cassock and Roman collar, looking about twenty-five years old. He was off on the side lines talking to a couple of Waves. Before long he excused himself and came over and I introduced him to my daughter. He talked to her for half an hour. He sang a little song for her, something about a mule. He asked her about her school. He asked her what songs she liked and he sang another one for her. Then Leo McCarey called him back to work and he all but kissed her good-by.

She was stumbling when I got her away from that sound stage. She had locomotor ataxia with chills.

Outside I found a bench and settled her onto it.

"Oh!" she sighed. "Ohhh! Ohhhhhh! Those blue eyes! And that Voice! Oh, thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Oh, Daddy, I love him!"

"What about Frankie?"

"Oh, pooh! Oh, Bing, Bing, Bing!" "What about Alan Ladd?"

"Bing, Bing, Bing!" she repeated.

I had killed off Sinatra and in the process given her the Alan Ladd shakes. Now I had killed off Ladd and she had the Crosby trembles. But that was all right. Paw sorta goes for Crosby himself.

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Mailing the doll had removed the last stubborn doubt . . . now he was free-he thought



HE woman behind the doll counter was looking at me with polite exasperation, her long fingers tapping nervously against the package she had just wrapped. I wanted to leave; I knew I had tried her patience.

"Something else for you, Captain?" she asked, glancing at the clock.

'No, thanks," I replied, taking a step backward. "You're sure it will get there all right?"

"Sir, I've done everything I can to help you. The package is properly stamped; you addressed it yourself. There is no reason why it shouldn't get there. Would you like to test the wrappings again, sir?"

I smiled wryly and shook my head. She began putting away the dolls I had

"Just one more thing. You're sure, you're absolutely sure, that this is a child's doll? I mean, it's not one a grown woman would use just for decoration? It is a doll a little girl would like to play with, isn't it?"

The woman didn't look up from behind the counter. For a moment I thought she wasn't going to answer. Other clerks were covering their counters. The store was closing.

"Captain," she said finally, "any little girl would adore a doll like that, and so would a lot of grown ones. I like her myself, and heaven knows I see enough of them. When it comes to pleasing us, perhaps you know better than I that the line between child and woman is hard to draw sometimes.

I jumped-I couldn't help it. She had never heard of Mireille. She couldn't possibly know-

The clerk stood up and, seeing my face, smiled reassuringly. "If it's for a child to play with, you haven't a thing to worry about. She'll love it!"

Reprinted by permission of the author from The Atlantic Monthly. This story was included in Prize Stories of 1948, The O. Henry Awards, ed. by Herschel Brickell. By William R. Shelton



I thanked her and went out of the store. Dusk was falling, American dusk in an American city. I leaned against the front of the building. I felt free now; the simple act of mailing the doll had removed the last stubborn doubt. I watched the neon signs light up, the elevators flash up and down the buildings; for the first time in a great many months, I was home. There was a train to catch. I could think about those things now. I started walking toward the station.

She would get the doll in about a month. It would probably go by boat to Naples; then by plane to the Corsican port of Bastia; then by Corsican mail bus to the village of Ghisoni. Perhaps she would see the bus struggling up the mountain, and watch it unload in front of the Romani Inn. Later she would glow with that radiant gratitude of hers which would be more eloquent, even, than the swift, delicately mouthed French words she would throw over her shoulder to Pierre, and Charly, and her mother. Once before I had thought of her face like this.

Another pilot and I had flown some supplies from Corsica to our new base in Italy and had stopped for a few hours in Rome. We would be moving in a few days and I wanted to buy Mireille a present. In a small shop on a side street I was shown a truly magnificent doll—a Swiss doll, the shop-keeper said. It had a plump, rosy face and wore a black satin dress with colorful geometric embroidery across the front. There was no doubt in my mind that it was the perfect gift for Mireille.

The shopkeeper noticed my enthusiasm and asked me how old the child was. I stood before him puzzled, unable to say, "She's eight," or "She's fourteen," or any other number of years. Finally I shrugged and drew a mark across my chest, somewhere between my belt and shoulders. This satisfied him; I was satisfied with the doll, and

the incident, for the time being, was forgotten. When we were once again in the air, headed toward Corsica, the doll was behind my seat. All the way across, I thought of Mireille's face when she opened the package.

I first saw Mireille one cold night when a jeepload of us, as was our custom, drove the twelve miles up to Ghisoni to spend a quiet evening eating and drinking with Monsieur Dominique, the proprietor of the Romani Inn. On this particular night there had been no singing coming up, and almost no talking; that morning, for the first time in weeks, we had lost a ship. Two ME-109s had sneaked in over the Alps to shoot down Leatherwood's plane, which was lagging after the violent turbulence above the Brenner had scattered our formation.

"Leather" was a quiet Texan, and I noticed it was the quiet ones who were missed the most. He used to drink with us for a while at the inn, then unobtrusively take his leave "to visit my family." When he rejoined us about midnight, his face always showed a remarkable and somewhat inscrutable refreshment. We noticed this, of course, and questioned him about the family, but he said little except to mention that there were children, and once he had pointed out the house to me.

On this night it was my purpose to seek out the family and deliver the news of his death. I left the others at the inn and walked down the single dark street across a temporary bridge to a squarish, rather cold-looking stone house perched at the very edge of the rocky gorge around which the entire village was situated. Candles and lamps glowed within the house, and I could see two tiny heads peering at me, like dwarfs, from the corners of the windows. They must have been watching the door of the inn up the street, as my approach in the darkness could not have been visible to them. Suddenly the two round silhouettes disappeared from the windows, and the next instant the door burst open.

Two figures raced down the shaft of light toward me. The leading one was a girl, with flying black hair and outstretched arms. I put out my arms to protect her, for it appeared her racing white legs would carry her forcefully against me. At the last moment she swerved, and her feet skidded to a halt in the gravel. The other, smaller figure, a boy, also stopped, then retreated into the darkness. The girl stood with her legs spread as they had halted, her arms clenched tightly across her chest, and her face turned toward me, so that it caught the full yellow light from the open door. Large, unblinking eyes

peered from behind hair that had fallen unheeded down her forehead. Her thin face was as still as a painting, and her mouth was parted, as if complete grief had struck her instantly and had frozen there on her face. It seemed incredible that a child could so quickly grasp the motive of my visit. To her, at least, my message had already been delivered.

Her small face had not collapsed in grief; something held that pale countenance in invisible support. For a moment the burden of my mission and the simple subject and predicate by which I had planned to discharge it were forgotten. Why is it that the face in the coffin is often more beautiful than anyone can remember seeing it in life? This girl's face was as of death itself, yet was of a delicate fairness beyond that of the animated and volatile face of the living. When I finally turned, a woman stood in the doorway looking at me.

"Won't you come in?" she invited, with an accent and tone that were both gentle.

As she stepped aside for me to enter, I wondered if she were old enough to be the mother here. She supplied the answer herself; for, disregarding what certainly was a very natural curiosity as to the identity of her caller, the instant I passed her, her face was turned solemnly and apprehensively to the walk behind me, where stood the girl.

I was shown into a rather bare living and dining room, in which I was immediately conscious of the four empty spaces of the walls, which appeared to be of the same cold, unfinished stone as the outside of the house. There was a very old woman in black, bending over a fireplace in the corner, and a tall boy of about twelve, standing expressionless by the center table. The mother, with the smaller boy, followed me in and indicated my chair with a gracious gesture of her hand, which was in no way apologetic, but rather, together with her erect carriage, gave me the impression that the circumstances of the family had not always been so meager.

I was disconcerted for a moment. Somehow I had expected to deliver my message to a man, one of those swarthy, robust Corsicans who could stand before a giant. Then, too, I hadn't expected to deliver it in English. Just "Lieutenant mort," and nod at the inevitable downward-spiraling interrogation the man would make with his hand.

I fumbled with my cap for a moment and cleared my throat. They were all looking at me—the old lady, the mother, and the two boys. At that moment the front door clicked shut. The mother turned her head quickly, I

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glanced toward the hall and caught a glimpse of the girl who had met me on the walk. All I saw was a short skirt and a pair of white, slender legs that came together once, like crooked scissors, before they disappeared from view. Leatherwood might have compared the legs to those of a colt, long, bony, and fragile, but possessing, nevertheless, a transient grace.

There was a moment's silence, then the sound of a light shoe on a stair, then another. The sound of her climb followed in slow cadence. No one moved. There were two short steps at a landing, then eight, nine more steps, a pause, then a door closed quietly

Somehow I got out my message. The mother only moved her hand to the back of a chair and replied that she would not tell the others, just yet. She poured me a glass of Cap Corse, and the small boy, Pierre, dug a few chestnuts out of the fire and offered them to me. I took my leave as quickly as I

Puzzled and vaguely disturbed, I walked toward the inn. Once I glanced back at the upper rooms of the house, but the windows were all dark. The house, showing only a minimum of light about its lower regions, might have been a lonely ship one wonders about as it passes in the night.

W HEN I stepped inside the inn, Monsieur Dominique, or Papa, as we called him, was explaining the virtues of his homemade pipes. His bushy, tobaccostained mustache was the color of the fire. He walked over and gave me a pipe to smoke, and I knew by the way he pressed it into my hand that the others had told him. He was a simple, amiable man, trying his best to be entertaining. Later I questioned him about the family.

"They were originally from Lyons," he said. "Julliard by name. The father was a French Embassy clerk in Belgium when the Germans attacked, and one of the few real Frenchmen who never ceased to fight for France. He went underground and trained his family to work with him. Ah, they made a name among the Maquis! The young one, the girl, have you seen her?'

I nodded.

"Then imagine her boarding a train alone, with a tag around her neck asking for help in getting to Paris, and a small bag in her hand-full of explosives. That is the way they worked, through the children. He told me she accounted for two trains, both over a bridge. He is a rare patriot who risks his family so."

#### About the author . . .

• William R. Shelton is 30. He attended the University of N. Carolina and N. Carolina State before joining the Army in 1941. He was discharged with the DFC and Air Medal with eight oak-leaf clusters, flew 70 missions. He and his wife, also a writer, lived aboard a 30foot boat a year and a half, writing. Last June he received an A.B. from Rollins College, where he had gone to study creative writing.

#### 

"They were lucky to escape to Corsica," I said.

Monsieur Dominique lifted his mustache with the stem of his pipe and spat vigorously into the fire. "Escape? No, not escape. They were ordered here by none other than General de Gaulle himself. Some papers or something the general wanted removed from France. They walked to Cannes and crossed at night in a sailboat. They were all like reeds when they got here; the girl almost died in the crossing. Monsieur Julliard was a sick man, but fighting was in his blood. You knew he was killed when the Germans invaded Corsica?"

"No-no, I didn't. I have wondered-" Monsieur Dominique looked into the fire and hesitated, as one does before imparting the bitterest part of a trag-

"We all saw him die," he said slowly. "He was captured in the fighting on the plain where your field is. Later, with three other men, he was tied to the top of a German tank approaching our village on the road by the gorge. We were barricaded here, waiting. We held our rifle fire, but the bridge was mined. We were helpless, you understand; the mines were set delicately. To touch them would be the end. When the bridge exploded, the tank rolled into the gorge.

"You mean the bridge beside their

"Yes," he answered, "They saw from the windows, la mère, la vieille, et les pauvres petits."

"How does the family live, Monsieur Dominique?"

"Pension come at first, you understand, but now-" He spread his hands. "Les Boches do not pay."

'And the old woman, who is she?"

'That is difficult to say. She is no relation: I think she is sort of tutor for the girl. She was with them through it

Shortly after midnight we told Papa good night and climbed into the jeep. We rumbled over the temporary wooden bridge and sped past the Julliard house.

I glanced back at it, then settled down, Had there really been a girl standing by the road, waving something in her

"Wait! Stop!" I shouted.

I got out. I heard her feet racing down the uneven road, and then she was standing beside the jeep with only her white face and long white legs showing at each end of a dark coat tucked in close under her chin. She hesitated, then stepped closer to the headlights.

Her lips were quivering from the cold, but her dark eyes were warm and lustrous. There was no trace of urgency in her manner, yet she seemed to implore us to some unnamed action. She made the barest attempt at a smile. thrust something into my hand, and stepped back into the darkness,

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All the way down the gorge, the scent of the lavender rose and wafted around the jeep. I had seen it growing behind the rocks on the southern slope of the gorge. Even in winter Corsica was, as Napoleon said, the isle of scent. The others smelled it too, of course, I wondered if they were thinking, as I was, that some forms of military ceremony had not quite caught up with the Air Corps. There was to be no rite such as the Navy or Infantry would hold if they had the time we did. In fact, there was never anything at all but an empty cot that didn't stay empty, very long.

"What are you going to do with

them?"

We were on level ground again when Fitzsimmon's voice rose like a conscience from the back seat.

What would you do with them?" I asked, turning.

"I'd throw them out next time we go up there."

T was two days later that we went back to the Brenner. They had had a big snow up there, and the clean white of the Alps had spilled all the way down to the river and the railroad, and had patched up all the black blemishes around the bridge. It would have been futile even to look for the wreckage. When we were over the pass, Grover, the navigator, launched the flowers in a paper sack as they do pigeons to keep the slip stream from tearing them up. The sack would rip open, and they they would fall clear.

When we were about halfway home he tapped me on the shoulder. "They're just now landing."

"What?"

"I say they are just landing. I figured it up on my slip stick. The tail gunner said the prop wash scattered them all over the sky. We were at twelve thousand angels. If they drifted down like paper, they're just now hitting the snow."

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The next time we were going up to Chisoni, I packed a few odds and ends in my pockets as I'd seen Leather do. When I rose to leave the inn, Fitzsimmons said he'd like to go along. As it turned out, all five of us wanted to go.

The family had just finished dinner. The mother, a perfect hostess, took our wraps and dispatched Charly, the older boy, for the company wine. The old lady in black began bringing in wood, and Pierre busied himself digging after chestnuts. The girl, barefooted and dressed in a short blue-and-white checkered dress, came up from the cupboard with an armful of glasses.

It was the first time I had seen her



in good light. There was nothing about her face to suggest the hardships Monsieur Dominique had spoken of. She was thin, but her cheeks were flushed with color, and her eyes had a fresh, warm vitality rather than the confused, hunted expression one might expect. As she walked around the table carefully distributing the glasses, a quiet smile of curiosity hovered about her lips, which broadened generously as she attended each of us who were seated. After she completed her circuit she walked over and stood directly in front of Fitzsimmons and Grover, who were making warming motions with their arms in front of the fireplace. They both stopped swinging their arms and looked down at her quizzically tilted head. Suddenly she was laughing, a merry, lilting laugh that seemed to drive the cold out of the corners of the room.

It struck us all at once that the girl was laughing at the contrast between her light cotton frock and the heavy wool jackets and trousers that Fitzsimmons and Grover wore. She plainly was not cold at all.

As her laughter died away, her

amused brown eyes went from one to another of us. We laughed and, in a simultaneous gesture of response, brought out chocolate, gum, and canned peanuts from our pockets, making an almost embarrassing pile of rations in the center of the table. We looked at each other sheepishly; everybody had brought something. Grover had even brought a loaf of white bread in a sack.

The family gathered around the table, and for a moment I thought we had made some serious breach of Corsican etiquette. Then the mother nodded, and the girl reached for the bread. Breaking it in her fingers, she passed it around, and we had to watch for a painful moment while they ate it as we would eat cake.

Afterwards, when we had been served with wine, Charly brought out a guitar. I played "Down Mexico Way" and "Lili Marlene." Then Fitzsimmons asked Mireille if she would sing. I began "On the Bridge at Avignon." Mireille, sitting on a stool at our feet, looked into the fire through the first verse; then, barely moving her lips, she started to sing. The voice that had rippled so clean and pliant in laughter became low and resonant.

She sang to the fire, and with the fire. She sang accompaniment to the licking of the orange flame around the coals, and the incandescent caverns beneath. She sang to the quiet blue that hovered in the groves of cedar, and to the snow above the village, and to the stars.

Avignon! The bridge at Avignon! We had a strike photo hanging in our clubroom that showed our "grands," our thousand-pounders, plowing into the bridge and into the Rhone. We made jokes about that song when it came over the radio. But when she started to sing we forgot all that. It was only the girl, and the fire, and the voice that drifted up with the smoke.

After that night our trips to Ghisoni became more frequent, and since there were always one or two new ones in our group, the family became well known around the squadron. We usually took bread and vegetables from our mess and had the evening meal with them. These occasions were always gay because of those invariable bilingual blunders which overcome even the most stringent reticence.

Mireille, in particular, took it in her head to teach us French. She was a tireless teacher. She could tell, as if by instinct, the meaning behind our faltering requests at the table, which at her insistence were always made in French, or what passed for it.

I suppose I saw more of her than the

rest, and when I returned from Rome with the Swiss doll, it was I who made the arrangements to have the three children down as guests of the squadron. From the moment they arrived in the tent area, they were showered with gifts of every description. The circumstances of the flowers, of course, were common knowledge among us, and Mireille received awkward but unmistakable gratitude. She was perfectly at ease with the small crew of men who followed her around from tent to tent. Her eyes had a way of exclaiming over each new gift, and she thanked each man personally, by his name, or by his rank if she had not seen him before. Sergeants, lieutenants, and captains seemed to expand with the promotion her soft-spoken French gave to their titles, and responded with unheard-of words like "honored" and "privileged." For once no one made a joke.

Occasionally we would go inside one of the tents, where Mireille's wide eyes wandered over the helter-skelter of personal possessions, and I noticed that invariably they came to rest on the few books to be found in each tent. Sometimes she picked one up and ran her fingers caressingly over its cover as if it were a smoothly polished piece of wood.

When Grover offered to show them the airfield, I went to my tent, carefully wrapped the Swiss doll with red cellophane, then replaced it under my bunk. I planned to save it till later.

HAT night in our clubroom, which we had built in a near-by stone barn, the squadron gathered for a last celebration. The party was a success from the start. Mireille sang again with the same quiet sureness she had had in her own home, and with the same extraordinary effect on her audience. Afterwards, when Charly and Pierre settled down to look at comic books, Mireille walked around the room studying the photographs on the walls. She stood before a group photograph of the squadron, and I realized with a start that she was looking for Leatherwood. No one had mentioned him to her, nor had she in any way indicated that she thought of him. But as her glance came to rest pensively on his likeness, I thought her eyes moistened for a second. I got the vaguely disconcerting impression that she regarded him with something more than fondness.

When she finally turned away she walked over and took a chair near the radio. She sat very quietly, her long lashes almost concealing her eyes, her body swaying slightly in rhythm with the music. After a moment the colonel walked over and, with a smile, asked

her to dance. I was struck with the fact that he offered no condescension to her age. She rose eagerly, with instinctive decorum, as if she were indeed the lady his manner implied. They danced one number, then others were cutting in.

She danced with the quick, boxy step of the French and with a high amusement that rang out when she tossed her head and laughed. Her long dark hair struck most of her partners just above the waist. That and her long white legs were the only reminder that she was anything less than a woman. All eyes followed her movements. Remote and untouchable, she danced the eternal promise and expanded the tight hearts of those to whom she turned, as she often did, to bestow a radiant, guileless smile.

I stood to one side watching. I was very proud of the attention she was getting. But more than that, I looked forward to the moment when I would be alone with her and would give her the Swiss doll. I would drive her to the pink house where she was staying with the Red Cross girls and give her the doll then. It would be the last time I would see her; we were flying at dawn to our new base—all but the rear echelon, who were taking the bombs and vehicles over by boat. The executive had arranged to take the three guests back to Ghisoni after we left.

As the evening wore on, Pierre and Charly began to doze, and Fitzsimmons packed them off to his tent. Gradually the room emptied.

Mireille stopped dancing long enough to tell each group good-by at the door. Her face grew sad for a moment; then, as she began dancing again, she apparently had eyes only for her partner. She seemed on her soul's holiday of happiness.

There were only a few of us left when I went into the game room to get her coat. As I lifted the coat from the ping-pong table I saw that it was the same heavy black one she had worn that night she thrust the flowers into my hand. Involuntarily, I held it out before me.

What a small coat! It was the garment of a child!

I stared wide-eyed at the coat for a long moment, then quickly threw it over my arm and strode out into the light. She was still dancing.

Of course she was only a child!

When she saw the coat on my arm she stopped dancing and, giving a low, contented sigh, pushed back her hair from her shoulders and walked toward me. "I dance with you now," she said, holding out her arms.

I tried to smile casually and shook my head. I still felt the impact of that enervating wave that had swept over me in the game room. I shook my head emphatically.

She dropped her arms, and a brief, unspeakable hurt welled up in her eyes. Then she smiled and, taking the coat from my arm, laid it on a chair.

I waited an agonizing moment while a war bulletin interrupted the music. Then we were dancing.

I held my head high, peering into the corners of the room as we turned, barely holding in my hands her small, warm figure. Everything I had seen her do, every English word I had heard her speak, everything Monsieur Dominique had said about her furtive life in France, flashed across my mind. The way she looked the night after Leatherwood went down, the way she looked at his picture, the way she danced. Everything followed a cascading pattern that belied, somehow, the modest dimensions of her coat. Vividly I remembered my hesitation, my inability to give an explicit answer when the shopkeeper in Rome asked me her age.

"Of course she is a child! Of course she is a child!" I repeated it again and again.

Driving in the jeep, I hardly dared look at her face; the night was too impenetrably strange, the stars too generous. She spoke not a word. Her head was thrown back against the seat, her hair playing like the shadow of leaves across the dim oval of her face. I drove fast.

I skidded to a halt in front of the pink house. I had to touch her to help her to the ground. Her hand was not cold. As I leaped into the jeep I barely saw her arms reaching for me. I jerked to a start. Above the sound of the spinning tires I heard her voice: "Bon voyage," it said, faint and uncomprehending.

When I pulled up at my tent, the doll fell to the floor of the jeep. I had forgotten it.

I carried it in with me, thinking I would give it to the executive for her when the orderly woke us for the flight. But after a night of fitful sleep, I couldn't bring myself to believe she would be interested in this child's gift; I had never seen her do anything that children do.

Logically, I had admitted during the night that I had never really understood her speech, and that immaturity is perhaps best established by the spoken word. I had admitted that children caught in a world catastrophe would mature quickly. But there was something else: these admissions had the frailty of logic. I packed the Swiss doll

with my things. Perhaps in Italy I could send it by mail.

It was even worse in Italy. She seemed to have lived too much for a child, to have left unsaid the constant, meaningless chatter of children I had known. Finally, fearing someone might discover the doll and ask questions I could not answer, even to myself, I gave it to a little girl in Fano.

My orders came to go home. With another pilot, I was to fly a war-weary plane to the rotation depot in Naples and transship to the States. It occurred to me that we could go by Corsica and land, that I might go to Ghisoni and see her and convince myself once and for all that she was merely a child.

W HEN we were air-borne, I put it up to the other pilot, mentioning something about seeing the island for the last time. He was willing, but I knew I could never land without having to tell him the whole story. I decided to go anyway; I had to know.

Corsica was under a blanket of snow. We passed over the bleak, unbroken whiteness of our old field, then saw the snow-hooded village sitting like a cornice on the mountain ahead of us. We circled low over the cluster of dwellings, and on the second time around, I saw the family standing in the snow. To one side, beside the old lady in black, I saw Mireille. Her foreshortened figure looked like a tiny tree. I was glad she looked small. I could barely see her hand stretched out toward us from her dark coat, and her bare legs implanted in the snow. I changed the prop pitch several times, roaring the engines. Suddenly she was jumping up and down, waving both arms in recognition, I raised my eyes quickly; I had seen all I wanted to see. I looked across the Ligurian Sea. Squall patches feathered up its surface all the way to the distant mountains of France. To the east was the jagged coast of Italy. I headed home.

Somewhere in Europe there may be children who have lost their childhood to war, or by-passed it, leaping as it were, full-blown to a form of maturity, but this girl below me was a child, a young girl hardly in her teens. I was free.





Courtesy Associated American Artists Galleries, In In the Fog Lithograph by Gordon Grant

## The Puritan's Ballad

My love came up from Barnegat, The sea was in his eyes; He trod as softly as a cat And told me terrible lies.

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His hair was yellow as new-cut pine In shavings curled and feathered; I thought how silver it would shine By cruel winters weathered.

But he was in his twentieth year, This time I'm speaking of; We were head over heels in love with fear And half a-feared of love.

My hair was piled in a copper crown-A devilish living thing, And the tortoise-shell pins fell down,

fell down,

When that snake uncoiled to spring.

His feet were used to treading a gale And balancing thereon;

His face was brown as a foreign sail Threadbare against the sun.

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#### By Elinor Wylie

His arms were thick as hickory logs Whittled to little wrists; Strong as the teeth of terrier dogs Were the fingers of his fists.

Within his arms I feared to sink Where lions shook their manes, And dragons drawn in azure ink Leapt quickened by his veins.

Dreadful his strength and length of limb As the sea to foundering ships; I dipped my hands in love for him No deeper than their tips.

But our palms were welded by a flame The moment we came to part, And on his knuckles I read my name Enscrolled within a heart.

And something made our wills to bend As wild as trees blown over; We were no longer friend and friend, But only lover and lover.

"In seven weeks or seventy years-God grant it may be sooner!-

I'll make a handkerchief for your tears From the sails of my captain's schooner.

We'll wear our loves like wedding rings Long polished to our touch; We shall be busy with other things And they cannot bother us much.

When you are skimming the wrinkled cream

And your ring clinks on the pan, You'll say to yourself in a pensive dream.

'How wonderful a man!'

When I am slitting a fish's head And my ring clanks on the knife, I'll say with thanks, as a prayer is said,

'How beautiful a wife!'

And I shall fold my decorous paws In velvet smooth and deep, Like a kitten that covers up its claws To sleep and sleep and sleep.

Like a little blue pigeon you shall bow Your bright alarming crest; In the crook of my arm you'll lay your brow To rest and rest and rest."

Will he never come back from Barnegat With thunder in his eyes, Treading as soft as a tiger cat, To tell me terrible lies?







By Olive McHugh

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Radio reaches its audience through the ear alone—and is written for the ear

## SO You Want To Write For Radio?

O, YOU want to write for radiol You have written speeches to give before the class. You have written stories for the school paper. You have written plays for assembly. But what makes a radio script?

The speech you gave depended a great deal on your posture, your facial expression, your gestures. The story you wrote allowed the reader to go as slowly as he wished, even to reread passages. The play called for scenery and costume and movement.

The radio script must convey its ideas and make its impression without any of these aids. It reaches its audience through the ear alone and is written for the ear. However, it must present a picture for the mind's eye. You must be able to make the listener see in his imagination all of the things he would see if he were actually viewing the speaker, or seeing the play.

First of all you must make sure that your listeners will stay with you. No one of your classmates is likely to leave the class while you are making a speech. In fact, he probably would not be permitted to leave even if he wanted to. Neither is anyone likely to get up and stalk from the theater if your play does not get off to a good start. His attention will be held by the movement on the stage. And, as to your reader-if your first lines fail to catch his interest, he's quite likely to glance on down the page, skip your long-winded introduction, and perhaps get absorbed somewhere in the plot.

But radio! Unless you can catch and hold your listener from the moment you start—Click—you are cut off and you might as well never have wracked your brain or pushed your weary pencil far into the night.

So, observation number one. You must get off to a good start. Your opening lines must be attention-getters, teasers. They should have in them an element of conflict or suspense, so that the listener will stay with you to the finish. Let's illustrate what we mean. Suppose we \*started a show with the lines:

JOHN: Now, you've done it. Just you tell me how we're going to feed seven kids on seventy-five dollars a week!

MARY: But, John I didn't know when I signed the lease that seven children went with the house. Oh, Dear!

Would you like to hear the rest of the story? Ask yourself why. Suspense and conflict have been injected into the opening speeches. What kind of lease did Mary sign? Who are the children? What will John and Mary do with them?

Observation number two. This is a trick you must keep ever in mind. Make the scene and action vivid. You must give a sort of third dimension to your script, but you must do it with words. Make your listeners know that there is a window here, a door there, a box of candy on the table. Make them see where the characters are, what they are doing. This can be accomplished simply through the dialogue itself with such lines as:

Close the door. There, now this is a secret. Here, have another piece of candy. Henry! Come out from under that bed this minute!

Of course, you aren't going to say things like this unless they help the story along, any more than you would close a door suspiciously or have one of the characters under the bed in your play for no reason at all.

Observation number three. Let the dialogue carry your plot along. Every line should move the plot toward a well designed climax or conclusion. If it doesn't, cut it out. It will slow the pace. It doesn't belong in the script.

Observation number four. Do not have too many characters. On the stage it might be all right to present the story of the old woman who lived in a shoe. You might even make each of her many children seem very important, and there would be no difficulty. The eye would easily distinguish one from the other. It's a different problem, however, when the ear must identify the characters by voice alone. Four to six characters are probably as many as you can use safely in a script and these have to be constrasted by age, voice quality, or sex, if the listener is to keep them clearly in mind.

So, here is a problem. If you were developing the opening lines suggested earlier, what would you do about the seven children? We won't give you the answer to that one.

Observation number five. You must be a master of transitions. In writing a story or composition you have learned to let the first and last sentences of your paragraphs act as bridges for your thoughts. In a stage play you drop the curtain on a scene, shift the flats, and take your audience into another world. In radio you must learn to move surely from one scene to another. There are several accepted ways of bridging time and space. Perhaps the surest and simplest method for beginners is to use a

narrator. Suppose, for example, that we pick up a scene just as it ends:

Tom: We've got to meet where no one will suspect us.

Sue: I know. Let's meet at Snody's Drug Store.

Joe: All right then. Everybody be there promptly at eight. (FADE)

NARRATOR: Now Snody's Drug Store was the accepted hang-out for the neighborhood crowd. And so, when eight o'clock came, there was nothing at all strange about six pairs of elbows being propped upon the counter. Pop Snody looked over his glasses at them and said (FADE)

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Pop: What'll it be, one soda and six straws?

It looks easy, but there are at least four things to watch in using even this simplest transition.

1. A line at the end of the scene hints what the next scene will be.

2. The narrator picks up the hint and shifts the scene with words.

3. The first speech following the narration identifies the new scene.

4. The FADE comes only at the end of the scene and at the end of the narration. It is generally unwise to fade into a scene.

This is just one transition device for radio script writing. When you have mastered this, you will want to investigate other possibilities with sound and music.

That leads directly to the considera-

#### About the author . . .

• From 1938 to 1948 Olive McHugh was in the Radio Education Dept. of the Toledo Public Schools, where she engaged in a variety of activities, including teaching script writing and production. Her most gratifying experience was the success of her DeVilbiss H.S. students in the Radio Division of the Scholastic Writing Awards, where during the last four years they took first place twice and second place three times, in addition to occasional thirds, fourths and honorable mentions. Since September of last year she has been the Program Officer of the Radio Division of the United Nations.

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tion of sound and music as special tools of the radio writer. Learn to use them skillfully. Sound effects can either sharpen the effect of a script, or they can clutter it to a point of confusion. It is a safe rule to use them sparingly and only when they will add to the immediate effect desired. Music, too, must be used with a sense of artistry. It should never be applied to a script as a purely detached element. It is used frequently to create mood or atmosphere and like sound it can be effective as a scene-setting or a transition device.

These are just a few of the things you need to keep in mind if you want to write for radio, but the most important element we have left for last. An artist might be skillful with brush and color and never paint a great picture. The pianist might be a technical wonder at the keyboard, yet play without soul. In the same way, the scripter might have complete mastery of the tools and devices used in radio writing and never write a worthwhile script. The *idea* remains the most important element of any art. You must have something to say. But, you ask, where will I find the ideas? They are everywhere. A cold fact taken from the newspaper can often be turned into a warm human interest story. Take this one for example:

"Two-thirds of the people of the world do not have enough to eat."

It is a terribly important fact, but few readers will be impressed by it, simply because fractions do not appeal to the emotions. The script writer will see in the same figures the story of a single child in Asia, starving from hunger. He'll tell the story simply, dramatically, and the listener will somehow care.

That is the script writer's job—to interpret big problems and general truths in terms of their effect on the life of a single human being. So, to be a good radio writer it is not enough just to be a master of the tools. You must have a story to tell, a message to give, before you can write. But once you have decided what that story is to be, go to it and get it down on paper in the shape of a radio script. And don't let your first efforts discourage you, no matter how crude they may seem.

#### Word Blends Enrich Our Language

#### By Barbara Owen

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves Did gyre and gimble in the wabe: All mimsy were the borogroves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Jabberwocky" by Lewis Carroll

Lewis Carroll may never have expected his absurd but logical words to become part of our language. But chortle and burble and galumphing have been absorbed from his nonsense poem as sensible members of our vocabularies, as have other of Carroll's "Jabberwock" word creations. Carroll might be called the "father of the blended word."

Blending, or forming "portmanteau words," means making new words from old ones by combining parts of two or more words. This can be done in several ways: by using the beginning of one word and the end of another, as in Carroll's toves, which uses the t of turtle and the ove of dove; or, by tele-

scoping a whole word into another word, as in tragicomedy.

Let's consider our three words blurt, chortle and slender. Blurt might well have been the slip of an ingenious tongue which meant to say either blow or spurt. Lewis Carroll had in mind both chuckle and snort when he coined chortle. It must have been a poetic mind which in thinking of slight and tender coined slender.

We take our vocabulary for granted, but finding the blend origins of words can be fascinating. Many words, thought to be simple elements, are really compounds. Did you know that flurry is derived from fling and hurry; that twirl resulted from twist and whirl; that boost came from boom and hoist; that dumfound originated in dumb and confound; that growl and rumble brought forth grumble; and that splatter came from splash plus spatter?

The war period brought forth over 5,000 new words annually. Many of these were blends. Who can forget robomb, paratrooper, G.I., chowmobile,

genocide, and snafu? Add to these air-brasive, Amvets, blacketeers, warphans.

Many trade names are blends, for example, Sunoco, Nabisco. There are also scientific blends such as electrocute, from electric and execute, and videogenic. These are all modern blends, but the unintentional formation of blends is an old, old process. Phrases have degenerated into one word through years of usage, for example, ampersand, name of the sign "&," from "And per se and"; nincompoop from the Latin "non compos mentis."

It is difficult to form a blended word which sounds spontaneous and fills a deficient spot in the vocabulary. F. P. Adams (F.P.A.) probably succeeded as well as any modern writer with his prosetry, a blend from prose and poetry. By now, you are probably aware that many of today's columnists are adept at coining portmanteau words. Time's writers, Walter Winchell, and Ogden Nash are among the many emulators of Lewis Carroll.

And if their word products do not enrich the language, at least they add color to our "slanguage."

Photo by Esther Handlet

## A Playwright Grows

N THE opening night of Arthur Miller's new play, Death of a Salesman, when the curtain rang down on the final scene the play received a critical ovation rarely matched on Broadway. Arthur Miller had written another success to stand in the front rank of our literature for the theatre, along with his earlier play, All My Sons, which had received the New York Drama Critics Circle award for 1947.

Arthur Miller's career as a playwright began in his sophomore year at the University of Michigan, where he wrote his first play, a three-acter that was pounded out in a week. It won a \$500 prize and convinced him that he ought to write plays. Mary Slattery, a fellow student who is now Mrs. Miller, shared this conviction. She never lost it, even in the lean years when her earnings as a secretary were larger than his as a playwright; even when his first Broadway play, The Man Who Had All the Luck, produced in 1944, folded after six days.

Mr. Miller is now 34 and lives in the Brooklyn where he grew up and about which he writes. He studied at Abraham Lincoln High School, played end on the football team. His knees were banged up so badly he was turned

## in Brooklyn

down by the Army. After high school came three years of work in a plumbing supply warehouse to earn enough money to get under way at the University of Michigan.

The tall, intense, hollow-cheeked man, who is tired of being told that he resembles young Lincoln, is not a born bookworm. During his boyhood and most of his adolescence he ignored books for sports. "The change," he explained, "came in my senior year at high school. I read Dostoievsky's novel, The Idiot, and a dam somewhere deep inside of me seemed to give way. A lot of feelings and emotions, stuff that had probably been stored up for years, came out with a rush. For months I read everything of Dostoievsky that I could lay my hands on. When I had finished I knew that I had to be a writer."

In one scene of *Death of a Salesman*, the leading character says, "A man who can't handle tools is not a man." This is really Mr. Miller speaking. When he bought a small summer place in Connecticut he toiled for six weeks from

An interview with Arthur Miller

By Eric Berger

sunrise to sunset building a work shack. When the shack was ready he moved in and during the next six weeks wrote Death of a Salesman.

This respect for physical as well as mental toil comes out in *The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber Who Was a Man.* (See pp. 18-23 of this issue of *Literary Cavalcade.*) "Why I chose a plumber as the hero of this fantasy," he said, "I don't know. The choice was unconscious on my part."

"Pussycat" was written in 24 hours, from the inception of the idea to the finished script. His ideas come suddenly, "the way marble comes in a solid block when you hit it right."

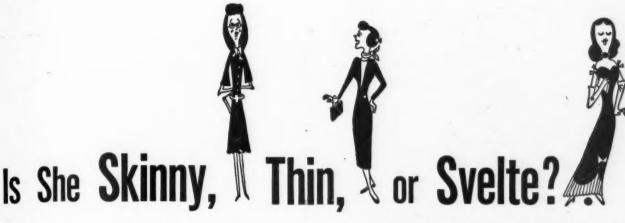
Mr. Miller explained why he prefers to write in the play form. "I think in terms of scenes," he told us, "of conflicts and climaxes. The words come later. I see events as you see them in dreams. When you see something in a dream you see it in terms of action, something happening. You never hear words in a dream, do you?"

The Russian writer Mikhail Sholokhov, who wrote And Quiet Flows the Don, is Mr. Miller's favorite novelist. Favorite playwrights are the Norwegian Henrik Ibsen and the Russian Anton Chekhov. "I don't think the way Ibsen does," he said, "but I admire his structural cleanness, the way in which event builds up on event. In Chekhov I admire the humanity and the pity, the sense of contradiction and paradox. There is a structure of emotions rather than of events."

Among living playwrights Mr. Miller's favorite is Eugene O'Neill. "I don't agree with O'Neill's mysticism," he added hastily, "but the man is true to himself. That is a rare quality. That I respect above all else."

Mr. Miller too has this rare quality of honesty, both as a writer and as a man. Despite his intensity, he is easygoing, affable, and has a sense of humor. On the opening night of *Death of a Salesman*, one of the members of the cast walked up to him before going on the stage and asked for a blessing. Mr. Miller placed his large hand on the actor's head and intoned: "Ibbity, ibbity, ibbity, sab. Ibbity, ibbity canal boat."

Maybe it was the blessing that brought down the house. We suspect it was the honest toil of an honest craftsman blessed with a touch of genius.



Most of our talk has a double function

NOVEL vocabulary game was introduced over the radio in England recently by the British philosopher Bertrand Russell. He calls it the game of "conjugating irregular verbs." Here is how it's played:

I am firm.

You are obstinate.

He is a pig-headed fool.

The game caught on quickly, and the British weekly New Statesmen and Nation offered prizes to readers who sent in the best "irregular verbs" of this kind. Here are some of the entries:

I am righteously indignant. You are annoyed. He is making a fuss about nothing.

I am beautiful. You have quite good features. She isn't bad-looking, if you like that type.

I am sparkling, You are unusually talkative. He is drunk.

I am a creative writer. You have a journalistic flair. He is a prosperous hack.

I am fastidious. You are fussy. He is an old woman.

I have about me something of the subtle, haunting, mysterious fragrance of the Orient. You rather overdo it, dear. She smells.

The important fact about this game to a student of the relationship between language and behavior is that it makes people sharply aware of the double function of much of the talking we do in everyday life. At the risk of laboring the obvious, let us analyze the first example in which the same conduct is characterized by three different expressions: "being firm," "being obstinate, and "being a pig-headed fool." All three of these expressions refer to an identical situation, namely, someone resisting all efforts on the part of others to change his mind. Let us call this function of language the referential function, which is the use of language

to point to facts observable in the external world.

But whether you call the fact that someone resists attempts to change his mind "firmness" or "obstinacy" or "being a pig-headed fool" is not determined by the situation as it exists in the external world. It is determined by how you feel toward his resistance. If you admire it, he is being "firm"; if you are critical, he is being "obstinate"; if his resistance makes you downright angry, he is being "a pig-headed fool." The choice of language, therefore, is not the result of the external situation, but the result of your own internal feelings. And insofar as language is able to reveal your own feelings as well as describe situations in the outside world, we say that language has an expressive function.

Some statements are purely referential, as is often the case in scientific statements. When a scientist says "Water freezes at 32° F.," you don't know (or care), and he doesn't tell you, whether the fact delights him or disgusts him. Some statements are purely expressive. Statements like, "I'm sitting on top of the world," and "Oh, boy, oh boy, oh boy!" reveal a profound delight on the part of the speaker, but fail to give you the faintest inkling of what he is delighted about. But most of the talking and writing we hear and read in everyday life is both referential and expressive at once.

Why is this distinction important? It is important because we all tend to mistake expressive for referential statements. When a newspaper editorial says, for example, "The President, in reckless disregard of the public welfare, invited national chaos by signing the vicious Jones-Smith-Harrison Act," there are many people who get deeply upset in spite of the fact that they don't know what's in the Jones-Smith-Harrison Act and would be extremely pleased if they knew.

By S. I. Hayakawa

Then there are the people who believe that an advertisement like the following tells them something about the car it advertises:

"Because Fleetwind has so long occupied a place entirely apart from other motor cars, the announcement of a new Fleetwind has become a significant automotive event. But no Fleetwind announcement has ever been as significant as the one that appears on these pages. For, this year, Fleetwind presents its creative masterpiece, a wholly new eight-cylinder engine, which is, beyond doubt, the highest development yet attained in automotive power plants. ... It has many unusual qualities which set it apart from all other creations of its kind. . . . And the manner of its performance actually challenges the imagination. It is liquid smooth; it is quick and eager beyond all experience; yet the power application is so effortless that the driver is scarcely aware of the engine's existence. . . . Even experienced Fleetwind owners must put aside all previous conceptions of performance when they drive the 1949 Fleetwind. . . . It is a revelation, from silken start to silken stop. . . ." (Quoted from a current advertisement.)

As the reader has discovered, the only referential statement in all this verbiage is that the car has eight cylinders

Now, as an exercise in handling and recognizing the expressive functions of language according to the Bertrand Russell game, try "conjugating" the following statements:

I am a trifle overweight. Naturally, I use a little make-

I don't claim to know all the answers.

I need plenty of sleep.
I'm just an old-fashioned girl.

MARCH, 1949

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CADE



Hugh Laing and Muriel Bentley in Aleko, gypsy ballet created by Massine, based on a poem by Pushkin.



Hugh Laing and Nora Kaye in *Lilac Garden*, story of a girl about to marry who attends farewell party before ceremony.



John Kriza and Melissa Hayden in Interplay, a breezy ballet showing play between classic steps and the modern spirit.

LITERARY CAVALCADE



Mary Ellen Moylan puts last minute touches to her costume while waiting for a cue in the wings. She is a brilliant performer in great classical roles.

• The ballet seems to be almost an American institution. Yet this art form is really a fledgling in the American theatre. Until about fifteen years ago the ballet flourished mainly in the large European capitals. Americans attended ballet performances only when one of these European companies went on tour. In 1933 the first American ballet company was organized. Early audiences were small, ballet is expensive to produce, and the company operated under a loss. These pioneers of the ballet persisted, however, and an appreciative audience was developed, together with a rich reservoir of native talent. Today, two great ballet companies, the Ballet Theatre and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, each tour every year, performing in scores of cities.



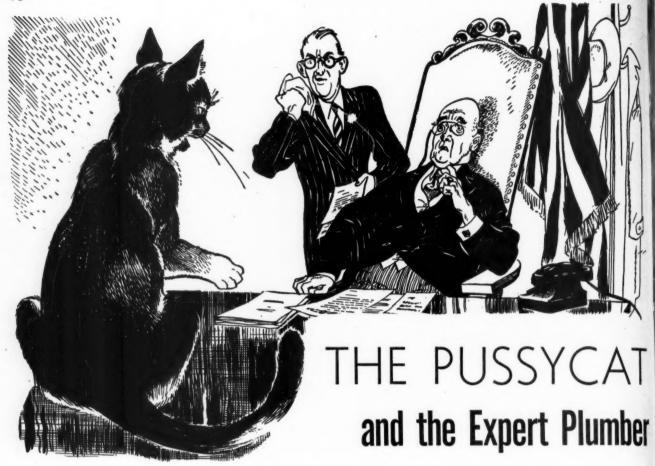
Alexandra Danilova and Frederic Franklin in Raymonda. Music is by Glazounov; ballet is about a girl betrothed to knight of Crusades.



Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo Bernice Rehner, Alicia Markova and Roman Jasinsky in Rouge et Noir. The music is by Shostakovitch.

spirit.

CADE



Sound: Clock being wound.

GEORGE (timid voice): Shouldn't have stayed up so late, Adele.

Addle (sleepily): Did you lock the door?

George: Oh, leave it open tonight. It's stuffy.

ADELE: Turn out the light.

Sound: Light switch-bed creaking as man gets in.

GEORGE: Ahhh, 'Night,

ADELE: 'Night.

Sound: A sigh—then their breathing—hold.

VOICE (trifle high pitched-peculiarsmall): George (Pause breathing) Mr. Beeker . . .

GEORGE (softly): Adele . . . 'Del! ADELE: What's the matter now?

GEORGE: Did you hear someone calling my name?

ADELE: Oh, go to sleep.

GEORGE: But really, I... Voice: It's me, Mr. Beeker.

ADELE (frightened): Who's in the room?

VOICE: It's only me, Mr. Thomas.

Copyright by Arthur Miller. Reprinted by permission of the author. This play was originally written for the Columbia Workshop, and broadcast over the Columbia Broadcasting System. All rights are fully protected by copyright law. GEORGE: Thomas? Who . . . ADELE: Turn on the light. Sound: Light switch. (Pause)

George: Why, nobody's here.

ADELE: Push the cat off the bed. VOICE: Please don't.

GEORGE: There, again.

ADELE: Go down and call the police. Voice: You'd better not.

ADELE (loud): There's someone in the room and we can't see him.

VOICE: But you're looking straight at me, Adele.

George: Del . . . don't talk. Close vour eves.

ADELE: Why?

GEORGE: Close them. All right?

ADELE: Yes . .

GEORGE: Mr. Thomas, ah . . . would you walk toward me, just come this way?

Voice: Certainly. (Pause)

GEORGE: Del! Del! . . . It's the cat . . . the cat can talk.

ADELE: (Screams.)

GEORGE (as Adele sobs in a terrified scream): Oh, Father in Heaven, forgive our sins, we didn't mean anything, we'll be good, whatever we did wrong we'll do right.

Tom: Oh, come now. Really, it's not hat bad.

GEORGE: Who . . . Who are you? I mean . . .

Том: I'm Mr. Thomas.

GEORGE: But we don't know any Mr. Thomas, I never . . .

Tom: All right then. My name is Tom. Tom, Tom the cat. Now, are you satisfied?

GEORGE: But whose spirit is in you? Tom: What spirit? Don't you give me credit for learning how to talk?

George (frightened): Yeh, sure...

Tom: Now look, calm yourselves, and let's talk sense.

George (softly): Look hew his whiskers move.

Tom: One doesn't whisper in company, Mr. Beeker.

GEORGE: Oh, pardon me.

Tom: It's hard enough for me, 50 let's not make it any harder.

ADELE: But how did you learn?

Tom: I'll explain everything. Will you shade that bulb, please? It's hard seeing you. Thanks. It's like this. You took me in, I was a kitten. Well, it wasn't long before I discovered that I was pretty smart. Follow me?

GEORGE: Ah . . . Yeh, yeh, I follow. Tom: Now will you stop watching my whiskers, George, you make me nervous. Well, as I was saying, I discovered I was smarter than most cats. At the age of nine months I began setting traps for mice.

George: Where did you get the traps?

Tom: Made 'em. George: Oh.

Tom: Anyhow, last year, I began watching you people talk and I got a feeling it might be worth my while to pick up the lingo, so to speak. So I did.

ADELE: But how?

Tom: What do you mean, how? What do you think a cat is, an idiot?

ADELE: I'm sorry.

Tom: Just keep it in mind, please. But being able to talk English wasn't much good because . . . well there was nobody to talk to. People ran like mad when I addressed them and the cats, of course, only understand cat language.

GEORGE: You don't mean cats talk

to each other.

Tom: Cats, Mr. Beeker, speak much more beautifully than men do. You'll never find a cat walking down a street saying to every one he meets, "Hot enough for you?" or "It ain't the heat, it's the humidity." No, a cat only talks

## Who Was a Man

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By Arthur Miller

when he's got something important to say, and he says it in one word. Things like: "Love me, darling?" . . . meow? Or, "I'm hungry!" . . . meow, Or, "I'm hurt." Yow!! Or, "gosh, I feel good." . . . purr. Important things, get it?

GEORGE: Yeh, I get it. I get it. Tell me, what do you want with us?

Tom: I want your help. To carry out my plan I must have human aid.

GEORGE: What do you mean?

Tom: This. I am the only cat in America who can speak and understand and read the English language.

ADELE: You read.

Tom: I love to read—except the funnies. They frighten me.

George: What's this plan you mentioned?

Tom: It's the most daring idea in the

history of the world.

George: You don't say.

Том: Mr. Beeker, I am going to be the mayor of this town.

George: You? A cat?

Tom: I, Mr. Tom Thomas. Everything is ready. All I need is a man who can write. I can't hold a pencil.

GEORGE: Now look here, Tom, that's going a little too far. I think . . .

Tom: I don't care what you think. You'll do as I say.

George: I won't stand for a cat ordering me around, Tom.

Tom: Mrs. Beeker, would you like to know what was going on in this house while you were away in Chicago last summer?

GEORGE: Say now, Tom, you can't ... ADELE: What's this? What?

George: You keep your mouth shut, Tom.

Tom: That's better. Now here's my proposition. Practically every one of the finest families in town keeps a cat. I've taught those cats to read and understand English. But only I can speak because I'm so clever. Now they've been reporting to me for the past five months. I have enough on every big man in this town to make him do whatever I command.

GEORGE: That's blackmail!

Tom: I've been around, George. That's politics. So what you will do is buy a big ledger and enter the private scandal of every person I give you.

George: But some people have no scandal to be ashamed of.

Tom: Then I make one up and spread it in the papers.

George: No editor would do such a thing!

Tom: The editor of the Gazette has two wives.

ADELE: Mr. Stevens, George!

Tom: Right. He'll be in the palm of my hand.

GEORGE: Oh, Lord!

Tom: Don't interrupt. Election for mayor is two weeks off. I've got the goods on both candidates so they'll campaign for me . . .

GEORGE: But will people vote for a cat, Tom?

Tom: Leave that strictly to me, George. Are you with me? Will you keep my books?

George: Well I—I don't know, I... Tom: I can ruin your business in ten days. You take opium.

GEORGE: I take . . . ADELE: But it's not so!

Tom: What do you say, George? I'm not kidding.

ADELE (sobs): Oh, George . . .

GEORGE: All right. I'll buy a ledger tomorrow.

Tom: Put it there, George old boy. George: Where?

Tom: Shake hands, I won't scratch. There! And now I must be off. I'm going to dictate a speech to the mayor in which he will explain to the voters why he recommends me for office. The mayor, you see, has evaded his income tax three years hand running and I

have all the documents socked away in a milk bottle. Good night.

George: Good night. See you in the morning.

Tom: And, George, please don't water my milk from now on. I'm going to need all my strength. Bye-Bye!

Music: Jaunty – cattish – gay which lowers and fades into . . .

JOHN: Now pull out of it, your honor. You're falling to pieces.

MAYOR: Take him away! Good Lord, talking cat!

JOHN: But your honor . . .

MAYOR: No, no, I won't believe it! Get him off my desk!

Tom: Your honor, if you won't hear me I'll just have to tell the authorities! I did not come here to be . . .

MAYOR: Authorities! But I'm the mayor, young man, I mean ca . . . that is . . .

Tom: Thomas is the name. Tom Thomas. And I was referring to the Federal authorities, the Income Tax Bureau.

MAYOR: What's this? What's this?

Tom: I have the papers to prove you've evaded taxes, cashed in on city construction, shielded murderers . . .

MAYOR: How do you know all this? Tom: Mayor, I know more about you than you do. I've read every letter you've written or received in the past four months, gotten reports on every 'phone call. I have enough on you to send you up for six hundred years, and if you don't believe me look in your safe for your bankbook.

MAYOR: (Silent) Tom: Go on, look.

MAYOR: It's been missing for a week.
What do you want?

Tom: I am going to be mayor of the city.

MAYOR: You . . . that is . . . mayor. Tom: You swing your machine behind me and withdraw your support from Wilcox. I've taken care of the opposition candidate. He has insanity in his family and he's decided not to run.

MAYOR: Well . . . so you have . . . mhm . . . well . . . grab him, John!

JOHN: Ha! Got him!

Tom: Yowww!

MAYOR: Now you little devil, you Beelzebub, we'll see who'll be mayor! Drown him!

Tom: Let me go, you fool! Yowww! MAYOR: Take him to the river, John, and hold him under till he busts!

Tom: Wait. (coughs) Hey, you're choking me! Mayor, for your own sake let me talk!

MAYOR: For my sake!

Tom: You can drown me, but the minute I'm dead all your private papers will be dragged along Main Street by every cat in Billington! My organization stands ready for revenge!

MAYOR: What organization?

Tom: I have a full-grown cat in every third house in this city. Your chief of police alone keeps three of my operatives in his office.

MAYOR: You mean?

Tom: I mean that if I'm killed you're up the creek and that goes for every politician in town!

MAYOR: Unloose him, John.

Tom: And let go of my tail. Well, your honor? Who's the new mayor of Billington?

MAYOR: Thomas, my honest opinion is that the people of Billington will not vote for a cat.

Tom: But they won't vote for a cat, they'll vote for a name . . . Tom Thomas, and with the papers on my side by the time the people go to the polls they won't know what they're voting for. No photographs, no personal appearances, just the name and anything you want to say about it. I'll be the publicity-hating crusader, the unseen marvel. I say it can be done and you'd better see that it is done!

MAYOR: I've gotta have time to think . . .

Том: Fine, then it's settled!

Music: Crash of music-victorious but still cattish-blending into the sound of a hair dryer-blower.

WOMAN: Say, Sally, you've got that dryer on too hot! It's burning my scalp! SALLY: There, how's that?

WOMAN: Oh, that's fine. Look at the Gazette, will you? That Thomas is certainly a wonderful man.

SALLY: He'd get my vote even if there was another man running.

Woman: You know, they say he's got a lovely tenor voice.

SALLY: Where'd you hear that?

WOMAN: Why, read your papers, dear. That man will put this town on the map, I bet. Anyway, he must be wonderful to look at—blond and tall and all that.

SALLY: Wonder why he doesn't let anybody see him though?

Woman: But he does. The mayor's seen him, and besides, why shouldn't he stay at home? I think he's very modest, and besides, people will vote for him just to see what he looks like, and besides, a man has a right to his privacy, and besides . . . (Fade)

Music: Up-then lower-then telephone bell.

George Beeker speaking.

MAYOR (through telephone): This is the mayor. Give me the cat. Hurry.

George: Tom. Want to jump up here and take it? The mayor.

Sound: Thump of cat landing on table.

Том: Hold that receiver a little higher, George, Hello?

MAYOR: Thomas?

Tom: Yes?

MAYOR: The votes, Thomas. Tom: What about the votes?

MAYOR: They have just finished counting them, Thomas.

TOM: Well? So?

MAYOR: You have just been elected mayor of Billington.

Tom: That's very nice, Johnson. But why is your voice shaking?

MAYOR: Because, Tom, old boy, there happens to be five hundred people surging outside my door demanding to see the new mayor. Now what do I do, tell them he's out chasing mice?

Tom: Don't be so sassy, I'll be right

MAYOR: Yeh? And how'll you get in? They've packed the hallways!

Tom: There's a tree next to your window, isn't there?

MAYOR: So what?

Tom: So I'll be right up!

MAYOR: But you're mayor now, Tom, a mayor doesn't come into city hall by a tree! And anyway they'll hang me if they see you! Enough is enough, Tom! Hello . . . Hello! Tom! Tom! Hello! . . . (Fade)

Music: Bridge.

JOHN: They're still pouring into the hallway, your honor.

MAYOR: Come down from that transom and get me an aspirin, John.

JOHN: I guess I shouldn't 'call you "Your honor" any more, sir.

MAYOR: No, John, from now on address me as mud.

Sound: Scratching of nails on wood. Mayor: What's that?

Sound: Same.

JOHN: Scratching outside the door, sir.

MAYOR: Good Lord, it's the mayor. Open the door a wee bit.

Sound: Burst of crowd noise-shut out by closing door.

MAYOR: Ah, don't leap up at me so, Tom. I thought you were going to

climb the tree.

Tom: Wanted to get a look at the

crowd.

MAYOR: Well, I guess the joke's over,

• Tom: Yes. We've got to be more serious from now on. There's a man named Billings out there. Seems to be the leader.

MAYOR: Sure, Dan Billings; been on the city board fourteen years, vice president of the bank, president of . . .

Toм: I want to see him.

MAYOR: What . . . But he'll see you're a cat, Tom!

Том: Every so often certain people will be informed that I am a cat. This

is one of those people. Bring me Billings, John.

JOHN: Uh . . . yes, sir.

MAYOR: But Tom, Billings is one of our first citizens, he'll have my head for this, he'll . . .

Tom: Open the door, John, and don't stare so.

Sound: Door opening, admitting babble of crowd as . . .

Tom: Get off that chair, Mayor-or Mr. Johnson, I'm sitting down.

JOHN (shouting over crowd): His Honor wants to see Dan Billings!

Tom: Keep away from that window, Johnson, I don't want you falling out. John: Mr. Billings is coming through the crowd, your honor.

MAYOR (hushed): If you talk to Billings I'll die!

Tom: Let him in, John.

Sound: Crowd noise is shut out by slamming door.

BILLINGS (well fed voice): Well! It's about time a citizen got a look at his mayor. But where is Thomas? I thought he was in here.

Том: How do you do, sir?

BILLINGS: How do you-who said that?

MAYOR: You see, Billings, I ah . . .
Tom: Won't you sit down, sir?

BILLINGS: Why, certain . . . Who's talking in here?

MAYOR: Ah . . . the cat, Billings. The one in the chair.

BILLINGS: The cat!

MAYOR: Yes, Billings, this cat is Tom. Tom Thomas . . . ah . . . the mayor.

SOUND: A body hitting the floor.

MAYOR: There, you see, Tom? He's fainted. Throw some water at him, John, the poor man has fainted.

Music: Comes up quickly and dies. Tom: So you see, Mr. Billings, I know all about your youthful career on the chain gang.

BILLINGS (pleading): But I was so young, I . . .

Tom: Oh, I understand, old boy, we all make mistakes, but I'm sure you wouldn't care to have the public or perhaps your wife know that you . . .

BILLINGS: Oh, no, no . . . What do you want? What?

Tom: The people - they respect you, don't they?

BILLINGS: This town was named for my great, great, great grandfather. I've been vice president of . . .

Tom: That's fine. Now go right out to that crowd and tell them that you've met Tom Thomas, that he's a fine fellow, etc., but that he's so darned shy he'd rather keep to himself for a while longer. Tell them I'm already up to my ears in official work and that I'm going to be the best mayor Billington ever had. Got it?

BILLINGS: Couldn't I just go home?

Tom: And when you're through, come back here and maybe we can arrange to get your father admitted to the fife and drum corps of the fire department.

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BILLINGS: How did you know he wanted to get on?

Tom: Oh, you'll find I know a lot

of things, Daniel.

BILLINGS: You don't know what that

would mean to Dad. He's . . .

Tom: Well, you just do your part

and I'll do mine.

BILLINGS: I'll appreciate it, Tom . . .

er . . . your honor.

Tom: Tom's good enough. 'Bye.

BILLINGS: Well . . . here goes.

Sound: Footsteps—door opening admitting crowd babble.



BILLINGS (over the crowd): Citizens!

Sound: Crowd hushes.

BILLINGS: I have just seen Tom Thomas, and let me tell you that there is an individual Billington will be famous for.

Том: Close the door, John.

BILLINGS: Why, do you know what he told me? He said, Dan, what this town needs is . . .

Sound: Door closing.

MAYOR: I would never have believed that in ten million years.

Tom: Johnson, we are going to talk. Heart to heart.

MAYOR: What about?

Tom: Take the ink-well and those books off the desk. I want room to walk around. Now listen. How would you like to be lieutenant governor of this state?

MAYOR: Now Tom, Tom, you're starting something again, and I'm not quite up to it, I . . .

Tom: Johnson, I am going to be governor.

MAYOR: Now, Tom, no pussycat ever has been or ever will be governor of this state! It simply isn't done!

Tom: But you would like to be lieutenant governor.

MAYOR: Yes, I would, I would, but I don't see how you're going to . . .

Tom: Listen. Why am I Mayor of Billington?

MAYOR: You got me there, Tom, I...

Tom: Because practically every important man in town has something in his past of which he is so ashamed that he'd sell his soul to keep it covered.

MAYOR: What I can't figure out is why nobody ever thought of this stunt before.

Tom: Because no prospective blackmailer has a clean enough record himself to dare do what I've done. And the only reason I succeeded is because I'm a cat with nothing to hide. Johnson, what I've done in Billington can be done in every city in this state.

MAYOR: How?

Tom: There are housecats in every city.

MAYOR: You mean?

Tom: I mean that you are going to buy two animal suitcases and meet me at the railroad station in half an hour. I'll bring two cats, my lieutenants. You'll carry one to Hillsboro, and the other to Brycetown. They will contact the housecats of the big shots in those towns, or the neighbors of the big shots. Then in ten days you pick them up and they'll bring me the goods. We'll keep sending out cats to every important town until we've got something on every politician and newspaper owner in the state. In six months I'll be ready, and with publicity going full blast I'll have the votes in my pocket.

MAYOR: But will those out-of-town cats become spies for nothing, Tom?

Tom: Silly man. There is one thing cats and people will glady do free of charge—and that's snoop. What do you say, ex-mayor Johnson?

MAYOR: Tom, the world is yours.

Music: Becoming the hissing of a locomotive standing at station.

CONDUCTOR (off mike): Board! All aboard!

MAYOR (whisper): Just drop them off in those towns, eh, Tom?

Toм (whisper): That's all. They know the rest. Hurry!

MAYOR: 'Bye!

CONDUCTOR (off mike): Board for Hillsboro, Brycetown, Makersville, Rostentown, Saul and Lantzbury!

Sound: Train starts—goes for a moment—then . . . Tom (over train noise): Good work, Johnson! Now take two more to Greenville and Bentley!

Sound: Up on train-hold a moment -then lower again.

Tom (over train noise): Fine, Johnson, now one to Greer, one to Bolton, one to Strongsville, and then one to Price!

Sound: Up on train-hold-then lower again.

Tom: Excellent, Johnson, now take them to Cardsbury, Melton, Burnandale, Monroe, Henley, Elsworth...

Sound: Up on train which drowns him out and continues a moment then fades into the distance.

Tom: . . . so you see, gentlemen, I've got it on every one of you, so that's that. In short, I have called you here tonight because you run this state and it is you who will make me governor. Now what's the answer?

FAIRCHILD: Thomas, I . . . do you mind if I call you Tom?

Том: Please do.

FAIRCHILD: It's true, Tom, that we run the state machine, true you've got every one of us cornered, but here's the hitch; the voters will simply not elect a governor they've never laid their eyes on!

Том: The voters . . . !

Voices: Right . . . never work . . . not a chance . . . etc.

Tom: But, gentlemen, that's exactly why I will run away with the elections! What's the weakest plate in any candidate's armor? His record, right? If he's been too pro-labor the emplovers are afraid, if he's too pro-farmer the workers wonder, and so on down the line. But me, why I've got the ideal record, the perfect political past-none whatsoever. No actions to be sorry for, no foolish statements to regret, in fact, gentlemen, it is just because I am nothing to any man that I will be everything to all men. Make me what you like in the papers, I will be that, and why? . . . Because all I am is a piece of fur with some vital information and a future. Now what's the verdict? (Pause)

Voices: Talking among themselves—deliberating—ad lib.

PETERS: Fellush! I don't care what he shays, hic! That man on the table is a pussycat!

Voices: That's all right, Peters, just sit down, that's better.

PETERS: But he ish! He said so himself!

VOICES: Sssh! Quiet, old boy . . . etc.

FAIRCHILD: Tom, we'll admit you're right.

Tom: I'm happy to hear that, Mr. Fairchild.

FAIRCHILD: For the sake of argument, let's assume a pussycat could become governor. But what then? If one man discovers you, if one man finds out the governor is a cat . . .

Tom: Now you've hit it, Fairchild, the secret of my success. I am a house-cat not only by birth but by profession. All my friends are housecats, so I speak from experience. Gentlemen, I have seen life. Life in the bathtub, life in dark cellars, and I've seen it from the the bottom up and I tell you that under the threat of slander, of being publicly defamed, no man will dare tell a soul that Tom Thomas, Governor Thomas, is a pussycat, should he make the discovery.

VOICE: But why not?

Tom: Because the one thing a man fears most next to death is the loss of his good name. Man is evil in his own eyes, my friends, worthless, and the only way he can find respect for himself is by getting other people to say he's a nice fellow. So be sure of it, the only man who'd expose me is one who really believes he's upright and clean, really in his secret heart, and such a man does not exist in this world.

VOICE: Boys, that cat has got a head on him.

VOICE: Say, Tom, couldn't we settle for \$50,000? I'm getting dizzy.

Tom: I will be governor, Mr. Wynne. Voice: Well, Fairchild, it's up to you. If his cats start dragging our skeletons into the streets we're in the soup.

VOICE: What'll it be, Fairchild?

FAIRCHILD: Don't be so sad, boys. We are going to nominate him at the convention next week, we are going to elect him in November, and it's my guess that Tom Thomas is going to be the smartest governor this state ever had!

Music: "There'll Be A Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight!"—played by the usual convention brass band accompanied by shouting of the crowd, etc.—then whole thing is lowered and over it is heard the sound of a hammer hitting on a lead pipe—the music now comes as though from a few floors below.

SAM: They sure are whoopin' it up for Tom Thomas in the auditorium downstairs. (The hammering continues)

JOEY (boyish): Yeh, he better show his face tonight. . . .

Sound: Door pushed open.

MANAGER: Hey! Hey! Cut that noise. The guests in the next room're complaining!

SAM: You want the sink fixed I gotta make noise. Tell the guests to go for a walk.

MANAGER: Now you lay off. That's

Tom Thomas in there with the state bigshots. I don't want any more of it. SOUND: Door closing.

SAM: Tom Thomas . . . in the next room!

JOEY: What do we do now, Sam? SAM: Tom . . . heh? Here's a dime. Go get yourself a soda.

JOEY: Oh, swell.
Sound: Door opening.

SAM: And don't hurry back.

Sound: Door shutting.

Sam (to himself): The next room! Gosh, I wonder what he really looks like . . . Boy, I bet he's a big guy with . . . this window . . . I bet I could walk right along that ledge and . . . and look right in on him . . . let's see. . . .

Sound: Window sliding up Sam: What a snap . . . why not! Sound: He climbs the sill.

Sam: Now if I can innnnnch aloooong . . . gee, it's high . . . just to that window. . . .

VOICES: Undistinguishable voices of several men in conference coming through the window.

SAM: There . . . sit . . . the biggest shots in the state, and what a view!

SAM (on mike-to himself): I wonder which one is Tom Thomas. . . .

That fat one. . . . No, he's too fat. The one walking around, I bet . . . funny, that cat sitting right on the table. . . .

1st. Voice (off mike): Nominate tonight, eh, Fairchild?

FAIRCHILD: That depends on the Southern counties.

2ND VOICE: We got all but three. 3RD VOICE: Let Fairchild settle this. 4TH VOICE: Now don't be too sure

about those Southern counties. . . . 5тн Voice: Well, I think Tom ought to settle it.

SAM (to himself): Now!

6TH VOICE: Yes, Mr. Thomas, what's your opinion?

SAM: Gosh, they don't seem to be looking at anybody!

FAIRCHILD: Well, Tom? What will it be? Nominate tomorrow morning?

Tom: You see, Mr. Fairchild, my only objection to tomorrow is that I'm afraid a lot of the delegates won't be rounded up and then we'll have to wait another day. So I'd prefer tonight.

SAM: That cat . . . I'm going nuts. . . . That cat is talking! They're shaking his paw! (Loud) Holy Smoke!

VOICES IN THE ROOM: Who's that . . . hey . . . (Ad lib shock). . . . Grab him! Get him in here . . . (Ad lib) Stand up you! What were you doing out there?

SAM: That cat . . .

VOICE: That cat is none of your business!

SAM: That cat is Tom Thomas! He can talk words!

FAIRCHILD: You're crazy! I'll have

SAM: Now don't tell me! I heard him talk and you called him Tom Thomas!

FAIRCHILD (amid hubbub): You say that again and I'll have you put...

Tom: Gentlemen! SAM: There, he talked! FAIRCHILD: But Tom . . .

Tom: I'll handle him, Fairchild Young man, what do you want?

SAM: Want?

Tom: Yes, everybody wants some thing, what do you want?

SAM: Well, right now I want everybody to know Tom Thomas is a cat that's what!

Tom: Why must anyone know? SAM: Why? You're a cat, misted . . As sure as my name is Sam!

Tom: But that's fairly obvious.

SAM: But . . . well, the governor is

not supposed to be a cat!

Tom: As far as the people know, I'm

a man, and if I can govern well what difference will a few hairs make? Sam: Listen, there's a little more

between you and being a man than a few hairs.

Tom: Is there? What? I can do everything you can except write, and if my nails grow a little longer inaybe. Il do that, too. Anyway, lots of men can't write.

SAM: But a man is different.

Tom: Just how?

SAM: Well a man is got . . . he's got ideals. Has a cat got ideals?

Tom: Certainly. My ideal, for instance, is to become the most powerful individual in this state. You're all wet, Sam, there's no difference between a cat and a man. So why expose me? I'll give you \$25,000 to keep your mouth shut.

SAM: But there is a difference, them
must be!

Tom: You'll have to get rid of you superior attitude, Sam. You can do nothing that I can't do.

SAM: Yeh? Can you fix a leaky pipe?
Tom: No, but can you catch a mouse
with your teeth—no hands?

SAM: All right, can you build a house?

Tom: All right, can your wife bear eight children at once without batting an eye? Drop it, Sam, we'll come out tied. Now look here, you won't be bribed, but if you open your mouth about this to a soul, your reputation isn't worth a tin dime. I'll smear you like mud and I can do it!

SAM: Look. What would a cat do in my place?

Tom: Same as a man. He'd take the money and buy a house in the country.

SAM: And you're the same as me, right?

Tom: Right.

SAM: You really believe that?

Tom: I am what I am because men are like cats.

SAM: O.K., do you believe it enough to come into the convention hall under my arm?

Tom: Certainly.

Voices: What? Tom, you can't do that . . . etc.

Tom: But don't forget, Sam, you won't ever again be able to walk out of your house in daylight. You'll be ashamed to show your face . . .

SAM: That's O.K. I'll carry you.
Voices: Now, Tom, you're not going
with him! etc. . . . '

Tom: People will despise you, Sam, I'll see to it. You'll be alone in the world with your evil heart!

SAM: I don't think so.

Voices: Don't go, Tom! etc.

Tom: Sam, I offer you \$40,000 to

keep shut!

Sam: Listen, Tom Thomas, and the rest of you, too. A pussycat might think he's a man because he got to be mayor; he might think he's a man because he's almost governor. But there's one thing that shows he ain't a man, and that's the same thing that'll keep my head up if nobody in the world'll say a civil word to me till the day I die—no pussycat could ever become an expert plumber, and that's the difference between you and me! Let's go!

FAIRCHILD: Oh, no, you don't.

Tom: Out of the way, Fairchild, I want to test my theory once and for all.

FAIRCHILD: But if he tells the convention!

Tom: Then that's the end of my career. But he won't, and then, gentlemen, on to the Presidency!

FAIRCHILD: But what about us? If he tells we're finished!

Tom: Well, Fairchild, if one cat is discovered in public office you can't expect the others to go off scott free. Let us through, Puss, and don't worry, Sam, the plumber, will regret the night he climbed out the window of the Victoria Hotel!

Music: "Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight"—out short

SPEAKER (off mike in a hall): Ladies and Gentlemen! We will now start the first ballot for governor! The delegate from the county of Atcheson!

DELEGATE: County Atcheson casts three votes for Tom Thomas!

CROWD: Cheers

SAM (on mike): Let me through there!

VOICE: You got your nerve! SPEAKER: County Barton! SAM: Let me pass, thanks.

DELEGATE: County Barton casts four votes for Tom Thomas!

Toм (hushed): I'll make it \$50,000. Sam, fifty thousand!

SAM: Pardon me, I'm going up on the platform, thank you.

SPEAKER: The delegate from Carroway County!

SAM: Say, Mister Speaker.

DELEGATE: Carroway County votes two for Jack Halsey!

SPEAKER: What do you want? Who are you?

Sam: I got something to tell the delegates about Tom Thomas. It's something terrific.

SPEAKER: Are you for or against? SAM: Oh, I'm for, all right.

SPEAKER: Go ahead, but keep that cat out of the microphones.

Sam: Ladies and gentlemen, I...
I am a plumber...

CROWD: Cheers.

SAM: The great Tom Thomas, the tall, blond publicity-hating crusader, the unseen mystery marvel is none other than this cat in my hands!

Crowd: Uproar of laughter.

Sam: I tell you he can talk! He's got you all buffaloed!

CROWD: Roars laughing.

SAM: O.K.! Tom. stand on this table, Now-confess! Talk! (Pause)

Tom: Meow!

CROWD: Roars.

SAM: Just a few words, Tom, for the audience, the delegates!

Tom: Meeeooooww! Crowd: Bigger laughing.

SAM: O.K., you fourflusher, now! Tom: Screech.

SPEAKER: Hey! Don't twist his tail! Voices: He's crazy! Stop him! etc.

SAM: Talk, Tom, or I'll. Tom: Oww . . . All right!

SAM: There!

Woman: Screams.

VOICE: Help that woman, she's fainted!

Sam: Talk into the microphone, Tom, I got your tail!

Tom: Ladies and Gentlemen. I am Tom Thomas. (Hush in the hall) I am a talking cat. Now I beg you not to let this unfortunate incident alter your votes. Because I have not changed. I am still as much Tom Thomas as I was before. And although I may not be good enough to govern expert plumbers I assure you that as for the rest of the population you couldn't make a wiser choice. For, after all . . .

VOICE: How dare you! Grab him! CROWD: Roars.

Voice: He's under the table!

Voice: No, that way!

Voice: There he is, heading for the window!

Voice: What a leap! He's out!

Voice: After him!

VOICE: Come on, get that cat!

Sound: Complete uproar taken up by music-hold-then fade into the panting of Tom.

GEORGE: Take it easy, Tom, you're home now.

Том: My thoughts are still racing, George.

GEORGE: You think too much, Tom. A cat must be . . . calm.

Tom: You know what, George? I found the difference between a man and a cat.

GEORGE: Since you started talking

English that's worried me.

Tom: The difference, George, if you want to know, is that a cat will do anything, the worst things, to fill his stomach, but a man . . . a man will actually prefer to stay poor because of an ideal. That's why I could never be president; because some men are not like cats. Because some men, some useful men, like expert plumbers, are so proud of their usefulness that they don't need the respect of their neighbors and so they aren't afraid to speak the truth.

GEORGE: Maybe you're right. But what are you going to do now?

Tom: I hate to get back into the rut, George.

GEORGE: I know, Tom, but the house is running with mice since you left.

Tom: Ahh, mice. What kind of a life is that for me? So I catch a mouse. So what? That's a rut, George. And anyway, I'm too sad to put my mind to it now. What've you got for me to read? Something tragic—as tragic as I am.

George: Well, look on the shelf.

There's Puss in Boots . .

Tom: That's kid stuff. Here . . . here it is . . . Paradis. Lost. And here's another . . . The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

George: Tom, you've got to get used to being a cat again. You've got to stop talking.

Tom: Yeh, George, there's no use pretending, I guess.

George: Come now, let's hear you meow! Come on!

Tom (uninterestedly): Oh ... meow. George: What kind of a meow is that? Give it!

Tom (a little more energy): Meoww. Oh, I can't, George.

GEORGE: But try, put your heart into it! Come on!

Tom (better): Meeoow!

GEORGE: Attaboy! Now like the old days, Tom . . . a good one . . . Like on the back fence, you remember? . . With that light tan babe?

MARCH, 1949

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ALCADE



## Cold Water and

#### Raid

OHNNY HAMMOND crouched in the thin shadow of the burned wagon and bathed his sister's white face with a wet rag torn from his shirt. This was the second day after the raid, and he was beginning to understand that his sister and he were two tiny ciphers in the middle of a vast land bounded by sky and distant horizons; and that this land was filled with blood brothers of the same Indians he had hunted so bravely in his father's grove back home in Illinois. But the Indians in Illinois had been conjured up from imagination.

He was fifteen years old and no longer a boy; he would never be that small again, chasing Indian chiefs among the cool beech trees behind the big white farmhouse. For his eyes, moving against his own will, roved brightly around the burned, hacked perimeter of the wagon train, seeing the unburied bodies and dead animals and the violent colors and terror of this land. He bathed his sister's face and wondered dully how God had seen fit

to spare them.

Two nights ago, he had laughed and run eagerly, helping his father and the other men bring their wagons into the closed circle and build fires and make ready for another wonderful night on the trail. He had taken the oak bucket and gone down the slope to a spring in a hollow of cottonwood trees, and there had filled the bucket by tipping it and letting the water rush inside; and he had drunk his fill and cupped the cool water over his sunburned face and down his dusty neck. He was living the great adventure and moving every day toward the mountains and the land beyond the mountains where they would make their new home; and already the farm and the grove, the understood smells and life of Illinois, were fading from his mind.

His sister came down the slope and

Illustrations by Charles Beck

Facing page: The 53 faced 800 of Roman Head's men, but they were armed with Spencers and a dream of civilization.



By Frank O'Rourke

A novelette about 53 brave men and a dream

burrowed into the brush beside him. washing her hot face and arms, and they grinned at each other and relaxed in the companionship. His sister was eighteen and growing away from him more each day; already, the young men of the party watched her and came sparking at night; but his sister was still young-like a colt ready for harness but eager for one last, sweet run among the green pastures of youth. She was dark-haired and slender and strong, and her name was Mary. They nestled in the brush and drank the cool water, and Johnny Hammond decided he was living the most wonderful part of his

He said, "This is good water, sis."

"Nearly as cold as home," Mary said. He was almost a man now, and he said scoffingly, "Just as cold. I'll bet it's colder in the mountains."

Mary Hammond murmured, "I hope so, Johnny." And that was when she had pressed against the ground like a frightened puppy as the first yells and shots had torn their world apart. Mary pressed against the ground and then started up, but he remembered the Indian fighting rules from his books, and saw Mrs. Murphy running toward the wagons and an Indian rise from nowhere, swing his ax, and split her skull. He heard her stifled scream and saw death for the first time, and his sister fainted; and then he was sick to his stomach, cowering down, putting one arm around her shoulders and trying to shut out the sounds by closing his eyes.

Johnny Hammond learned a great lesson in the early dusk of that night that the noise of dying and fighting and gunfire and screaming could not be shut from a man's heart by closing his eyes. He was deathly afraid to the point of rigid immobility, but he realized that his sister and he had been overlooked and that their only chance was to lie in the brush until everything was over: and so he held his breath and was sick and counted the seconds-agonizingly slow ones-until the last shots were fired, the screaming done, and the Indians riding away with a final burst of gutteral shouting. He lay in the brush all night, unable to move, and at dawn touched his sister's shoulder timidly and said, "I'll go look, Mary," and crept up the slope on his hands and knees.

He had done a great amount of work since that time. He had found his mother and father and had buried them under the upturned wagon. His sister had emerged from a kind of coma when he brought her up to the wagons, only to cry out and then return to the same state. He bedded her in a rumpled, dusty nest of charred blankets beside their own wagon, whose body was a broken, flame-seared mass of twisted wood and iron. He had tried to bury the others that first day, but had given up in sickness and anger. He found a little food, but his sister would not eat, and he carried cold water from the spring and sat beside her, bathing her white face and talking to her in a small, half-brave voice.

On the second day, he found his father's rifle, loaded it as his father had taught him, and sat in the ragged shade of the burned wagon, wondering what

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to do. He was bathing his sister's face for the hundredth time and beginning to realize what faced them, when he looked without hope to the southeast and saw a long, black column wind over the ridge and approach the spring. For one breathless moment he thought it was Indians and his fingers closed over the rifle; and then he caught the reflection of sunlight on bright metal, and began to cry softly.

#### Scouts Report

Captain Forester checked his column on a ridgetop crossing its line of march. a long and gently swelling crest of land rolling from the south and extending limitlessly to the north; waiting for his advance point of two scouts to return from the sun-misted distance, he allowed himself the comfort of slouching in his saddle and relaxing his sweaty body. He sat in this unmilitary fashion and watched the black dots creep down the far ridge, swell to the size of brown beetles with legs scissoring in the sunmist, and change suddenly into men on horses riding in the swale grass and up the slope toward the column. Captain Forester thought, waiting for their report, how the days were a never-ending structure of this same obscure pattern of slow, steady advance toward an unseen enemy, with some equally obscure destiny to be worked out and climaxed by himself and these men when they met that enemy. He had these barren, cynical thoughts in the last moments of waiting, as he heard, to his rear, the sound of weary men talking thickly about water and action.

The two scouts reined up before him, and the older, a solemn-faced man, wiped face and forearms with careful deliberateness and then nodded toward the distant ridge. This scout was Henry Epps, and he said, "Big war party moving northwest, Captain."

"How far to water, Henry?" Captain Forester asked.

"Four hours," Epps said. "On their line of march, it looks. A good spring."

"We'll camp there," Captain Forester said. "Better keep the same interval, Henry." He turned and gave his men a sharp look, noting the condition of horses and of men alike—the men's dusty clothes, the murmur of their speech, which differed from that of regular troops. Five minutes later, when the advance scouts were once more dissolved to beetle size, he raised one arm, called, "Let's go on," and urged his black down the ridge's dropping swell.

Captain Forester was tired and cotton-mouthed and worried; and when his men straightened out from the slight bunching incurred by their halt and rode in easy swing, he thought of

Lieutenant Payne riding the rear and wondered if Payne still held to his illusions of grandeur about the West and the bold manner in which a man could gain fame and fortune overnight. Payne would sit beside him after dark and talk of cities and lights and women as if all things were beyond the horizon. Civilization was just over the horizon, that was true, but had Payne ever given a thought to where the horizon started or ended? The same horizon lay before both of them, and in that direction were two things: life or death. No glory and no love; just life or death.

Captain Forester was a quiet and sober man through the afternoon march, leading his column and holding a steady interval behind him, and thinking of the way things happened to bring about

#### About the author . . .

• Frank O'Rourke is a prolific writer. Last fall he had two books published: Action at Three Peaks, a Western, and Flashing Spikes, a baseball novel. These are the first of a series he is doing between turning out stories for most of the leading magazines. He was born in Colorado, educated in Missouri, and knows well the West about which he writes. At present he is living in Clearwater, Florida.

#### 

the oddity of two officers—a captain and a second lieutenant—leading a party of fifty-one civilians into the middle of Indian country. Captain Forester was old at this game; but Lieutenant Payne was only four months out of the Point and too young to appreciate the vagary of fate that sent them out with a group of hard-bitten men, the least of whom was equal to (and most of whom were better than) the regular troopers of their regiment.

Understrength had caused this situation-that and the continued, increasing action of the Northern Chevenne, Arapaho, and Oglala Sioux under the canny leadership of a tall chief named Roman Head. Roman Head had led his warriors for months, killing settlers and travelers, until orders came down to Colonel Adams, and Adams was forced to move into the field with an inadequate force. But Adams was an old head and called for a volunteer company of frontiersmen to act as the bait in a trap for Roman Head; and here he was, Captain James Forester, leading that small company of experienced men in a deliberate effort to close with Roman Head and catch him in a trap. Most of these men, Captain Forester knew, had lost friends and relatives in

Roman Head's raids; there was no question of their fighting ability. They had enlisted for that single purpose.

At sundown, topping a high ridge that ran from northeast to southwest across their line of march, Captain Forester saw his advance point galloping up the slope.

Henry Epps pulled up harshly and said, "What's left of a train around the spring."

"In this area?" Captain Forester said.
"The fools!"

"No sign of life," Epps said. "All wiped out, I reckon."

Captain Forester said, "We'll go down and take a look."

Captain Forester led the column down the ridge and around the treeshaded pool to the burned wagons,

Epps said, "A young'un, Captain, beside that upset wagon."

Captain Forester saw the boy squatting beside the wagon, holding a dirty rifle at the ready, the boy's face trying to smile. The smile turned into tears as Forester and Epps dismounted. Captain Forester took the rifle from the boy and placed it carefully on the ground; then he saw the girl lying on charred blankets and knelt down beside her. The boy's face was near his shoulder, dirty and wan, tears cutting white gullies in the caked grime on his cheeks and along his snub nose. He was about fifteen years old or so, this boy, with taffycolored hair and scratched bare feet and a skinny, wiry body. Captain Forester touched the girl's arm gently and wondered how these poor fools had strayed so far from the regular trail across the plains in this troubled time.

Roman Head, so named by the whites, listened to the reports of his scouts as they rode in from the compass points. He stood six feet tall and broadshouldered, naked but for a breech clout and moccasins, a dark-skinned man with sharp wrinkles cutting his face deeply on each side of his prominent nose. He had around him in these hills five hundred warriors, with yet another half thousand half a sun's fast ride to the north-and all of this power untouched by the soldiers. He was south of the great trail in the wild land that could hide one man or a thousand with equal facility; and two suns behind him lay the burned embers of the wagon train, last blood in a long series of such coups for his warriors.

This man, intelligent and brave, now possessed two new facts from his scouts. A column of fifty-three men—two soldiers and fifty-one plainsmen—was moving steadily from the southeast, following his trail; and far to the northeast, marching in a tightening circle,

rode a larger column of two hundred soldiers whose goal must be a meeting with the smaller column.

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His subchiefs were around him, awaiting his decision, but knowing it before he spoke. This was the chance given once to a warrior in his lifetime; first, a wagon train strayed foolishly from the great trail; and now a small column of fifty-three equally foolish men who believed they could drive all before them and eventually catch the warriors of Roman Head in a trap between them and the larger column.

He spoke with mouth and large hands, giving them his decision: to allow the small column of fifty-three men to advance freely one more sun into the valley of the Yellow River; and, with the larger column still three suns distant, to fall upon and kill every man of the smaller column before wheeling north to give undivided battle to the larger column. This was his strategy and it was good, for it was simple. He gave his orders, and the subchiefs rode out fanwise to their warriors.

#### Food and Sleep

Captain Forester said, "Are you hungry, son?"

Johnny Hammond nodded mutely and pointed to his sister. "She's sick. Are you a soldier?"

"My name is Captain Forester. What's your name, son?"

"Johnny Hammond," the boy said.
"That's my sister Mary. She's eighteen."

Captain Forester motioned to Lieutenant Payne, who came up quickly and dropped to one knee at sight of the girl. Captain Forester said, "A burying detail at once. Save everything of personal value. Send Harris up here."

Lieutenant Payne looked again at the girl and said, "Yes, sir," and hurried away.

Johnny Hammond wiped his tears, looked at Forester, and felt better. "Can you take us home?" he said.

Captain Forester took the wet rag from Johnny Hammond and wiped the girl's face. He said, "Of course, Johnny. But we'll take care of your sister first. Don't you think we'd better do that?"

He could not tell the boy, not right away, that returning him and the girl to the nearest post was an impossibility; that the boy and his sister would be forced to march with the column. Such unforeseen human elements as a boy and girl were not included in the war plans of an army.

plans of an army.
"Yes, sir," Johnny Hammond said.
"That's best."

Mary Hammond opened her eyes and saw her brother's dirty tear-gullied face, and then she saw Captain Forester -a heavy-shouldered squat man in his late thirties, deeply tanned and dustcovered, wearing the blue uniform she remembered from other days. As she stared and moved her tongue slowly, an older, thinner man in faded black clothing stooped beside Captain Forester and smiled warmly at her, giving her a strange but comfortable feeling.

"Will you take a look, Harris?" Captain Forester said.

Harris took the wet rag and bent over the girl. "Now, miss, do you feel better?" he said.

Mary Hammond found her tongue, surprising herself, and said, "Thank you. Some."

"Let Harris take care of your sister, Johnny," Captain Forester said. "I think we'd best go down to the spring and wash and have a drink. All right, son?"



Johnny said, "Yes, sir," and followed Captain Forester to the spring. "I'll bet it's cold water," Captain For-

"I'll bet it's cold water," Captain Forester said. "Where's the best place to drink, Johnny?"

Johnny Hammond pushed into the brush and went on his knees above the pool. "This is where I got our water, sir."

"Fine," Captain Forester said gently, feeling his way cautiously among the dark shadows of this boy's immediate memory with more care and thought than he had given any man for many years. "I need a good drink. Where are you from, Johnny?"

"Illinois." Johnny Hammond said.

"Illinois," Johnny Hammond said.
"Will you take us home?"

"Of course," Captain Forester said once more. "Now take your drink and wash your hands and face, and then we'll eat."

Johnny Hammond felt much better and said, "Yes, sir. I'm sure dirty." This made him remember his mother, and he had to splash water all over his face and hands to hide the quick, hot tears.

Meanwhile, Harris was bending over Mary, talking softly and bathing her face. "Why don't you sit up, Miss Hammond?" he said at last. "A drink of water and a bite of hot food to eat, and you'll feel much better, won't you?"
"Yes," Mary said, "Johnny-?"

"A fine boy," Harris said. "Down scrubbing his neck and ears with the captain, Miss Hammond. He'll be back in a minute and you won't know him. Are you hungry?"

"Hungry?" Mary Hammond said.

"Why-I guess I am, Mr.-"
"Harris," Harris said. "Now, let's try to sit up."

He had to get this girl on her feet, ready to ride, for he knew what lay before them. He hoped she was a strong-minded girl, with a backbone. Harris lifted her to a sitting position and braced her against the wagon. He was holding her in this way when Lieutenant Payne returned and stood beside them, watching the girl.

"Lieutenant," Harris said softly. "Can you find a dipper?"

Lieutenant Payne wanted to kneel down and assist the girl and tell Harris to go find a dipper; but he swallowed the impulse. He searched around the wagons and found a dented dipper, scoured it clean in the cooling sand, and brought it to Harris. Harris held a dipper of cool water, taken fresh from the oak bucket, to her mouth. She sipped timidly and suddenly she drank deeply.

"Good," Harris said. "Now sit back, Miss Hammond. You can have another drink in a little while and then we'll eat. I'll go see about your supper."

Lieutenant Payne, at this moment, was a young man watching a pretty girl hopefully. Harris said, "Lieutenant, would you-?"

"With pleasure," Payne said. "Tell the captain where I am if he calls."

Harris smiled and turned away, and smiled again to himself, enjoying this situation and feeling a new admiration for the young officer who seemed to possess, beneath his strict and still shiny school ideals, a good amount of common sense and judgment.

Payne said, "I'm Lieutenant Payne, Miss Hammond."

"Glad to know you, Lieutenant," Mary Hammond smiled. "I'm a little tired, I guess."

"Don't worry," Payne said. "Food and sleep, and you'll be as pretty as ever."

He let the words slip out, and wondered if he had said the wrong thing; but Mary smiled at him, and he was immeasurably pleased with himself and surprised at this feeling over a mere waif of a girl.

Henry Epps stood beside the spring with Captain Forester, chewing the last bite of a scanty meal. Epps said, "They're around us now, Captain, but I reckon they'll pull off in an hour." "How far to the river?" Captain Forester asked.

"Five hours' steady ride," Epps said. "I figure we'd best go on tonight, Captain. Roman Head is looking for us by now. I say get to the river and be ready for him, come morning.

"Do you think he'll jump us in the morning if we do?" Captain Forester

asked.

"Maybe," Epps said. "If he does, we're half a day closer to the colonel.'

"Yes," Captain Forester murmured. "How many warriors do you estimate, Henry?"

"Thousand," Epps said dryly. "Give

or take a few.'

"All right," Captain Forester said. "It'll be hard on that boy and the girl, but we have no choice. We'll ride at once."

#### **Soldiers Obey Orders**

Johnny Hammond's legs were stiff and sore from the long, fast ride in the darkness. He remembered eating a hot supper and expecting to sleep, but Captain Forester had lifted him on a big horse, and he had seen Harris and the other soldier lift Mary to another horse; and then he rode and dozed off and felt Captain Forester's big hand steady him time and again. Now he sat beside the captain and watched the fire burn down to glowing embers. He knew they had ridden down a long slope to a river and were camped on the bank in a willow grove, but where they were, or why, he did not know.

Across the fire, wrapped warmly in well-shaken blankets, his sister looked better every minute, and talked with Lieutenant Payne, the other soldier. Best of all, he could talk without choking up. A single thought remained constant in his mind, though: to go home and never return to this land.

Captain Forester sat cross-legged like an Indian, his face reflecting the red fire glow, his big hands cleaning his heavy revolver and rifle. Johnny Hammond reached over and touched the rifle.

"Feel better, Johnny?" Captain Forester asked.

Johnny was sleepy, but he said, "Yes, sir. When are we going home, sir? To-

Captain Forester sighed and moved his stiff legs toward the fire. He needed sleep desperately and could hear the men around him snoring; but he had to make this boy understand. He wasn't sure of the girl's feelings, but give Payne another hour with her, if she didn't fall asleep, and she might stand the gaff.

Henry Epps drifted silently into fire-

light from nowhere, and said, "Double pickets, Captain. They won't surprise

"Good," Captain Forester said. "Get

a little sleep yourself, Henry."
"Maybe," Epps said, and drifted "Maybe," Epps said, and drifted away again, making Johnny Hammond think of a short, wide ghost.

"I'll tell you, Johnny," Captain Forester said heavily. "You know what it means when someone gives you an order, don't you?"

"Yes, sir," Johnny Hammond said.

"Like doin' chores."

"Exactly," Captain Forester said. "I take orders from my colonel, Johnny. The colonel commands our regiment. You understand a colonel is much high-

er in rank than a captain?"

Johnny Hammond nodded. Captain Forester said, "I take orders from my colonel and he takes orders from the general, and the general takes orders from a bigger general in Washington, our capital. And in some cases, Johnny, the biggest general takes orders from a man called the secretary of war, and he takes his orders from the President. Do you understand?"

"I think so," Johnny Hammond said.
"Do they send the same order way out

here to you, sir?"

"Yes," Captain Forester said. "But when it gets here, it is broken into little orders and other men like me each get one little piece, and if we do our piece correctly, all of them finally carry out the first big order. Is that hard to understand, Johnny?"

Johnny said, "I think I understand." "I'm a soldier, Johnny," Captain Forester said. "I must obey my orders, no matter what happens. That is my duty to my country. That's why I can't send you back to the post right away. I'd like to, but my orders won't let me send even one man with you, and you'd have to have at least four. But don't worry. We'll be all finished with our business in a few days, and then you'll be on your way home.

Johnny Hammond felt the sickness grip on his stomach. "We can't go back

right away?"
"I'm sorry," Captain Forester said. "Johnny, have you ever had a licking?"

"Yes, sir." Johnny said.

Captain Forester smiled. "If I sent some of my men back with you now, my colonel would give me an awful licking, not with a stick, but with his tongue. You see, the colonel depends on me.'

Johnny Hammond could hear Mrs. Murphy scream once more. He said thickly, "You're gonna fight the Indians, ain't you?'

"Maybe," Captain Forester said. "We might not see a one.'

"I hope we don't," Johnny Hammer said. "I don't want to see any more la dians, never again. I want to go home I don't want to go to Oregon." He paused. "My uncle is in Oregon al. ready.'

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"Oregon is a beautiful land," Cap tain Forester said. "It will be a fine place to live in soon. But no land comes easy, Johnny. We must work for it, and some of us must give our lives to make the land safe for our friends.

"I hate Oregon," Johnny said tightly "I want to go home."

"We'd best go to sleep," Captain Forester said. "We'll talk about it to morrow."

Across the fire, Lieutenant Payne talked with Mary Hammond. He said "It's my dream to see Oregon,"

"It was mine," Mary Hammond said.
"I don't know now, Lieutenant. Ou uncle is there, but I've got Johnny to care for. I think we'd better go back home. When will you take us back?"

"Soon," Payne said. "We have our duty, Miss Hammond. But don't fret over it. I'll watch you all the time, and so will every man here. We'll contact the colonel and then go back. It won't be long.

"I hope not," Mary said.

"Ah," Payne murmured. "It's not impossible that I'll be in Oregon soon."

Mary Hammond looked up cautious ly and said, "You might?"

"Yes," Payne smiled, "An escort for a large train. Our troops may be assigned.'

"Oregon," Mary Hammond said sleepily. "They told us it was beauti-

"It is," Payne said. "I love the West, Miss Hammond. I intend to stay out here.

"Oh," Mary Hammond murmured. "The captain is going to sleep. I'd best, too. I'm very tired.'

"Good night," Payne said softly.

#### Attack

A good commander reforms his plans to suit conditions. Roman Head began moving that night on hearing of the march to the river by the smaller column. He sent two hundred warriors northeast to harass and delay the advance of the larger column in such a manner as to make its commander believe he was fighting the entire force of Roman Head; and by delaying him as much as possible-perhaps five suns -to give Roman Head ample time to annihilate the smaller column. Roman Head rode now at the head of his great war party, eight hundred strong, moving toward the broad, sun-baked valley of the Yellow River where cover was at a minimum and a dawn attack upon the smaller column, now camped on the river's east bank, was certain of complete success. Roman Head formed his attack as he rode: to split his warriors into two parties, one on each side of the river, to attack in grey dawn, kill or drive away the horses, and leave the whites on foot, where they could be picked off.

Captain Forester woke at four o'clock as Henry Epps came from the greying shadows and crouched beside him.

"Hear the horses?" Epps said softly. The horses were sneezing and moving restlessly on the picket line.

"I know," Captain Forester said. "Are they around us?"

"I'm not likin' this now," Epps said. "I can't tell is it scouts or the big war

"Either one," Captain Forester said. "We'll be ready for them, Henry."

A picket shouted suddenly and fired. Captain Forester was out of his blankets, leaping toward the picket line, buckling on his holster and scooping up his rifle as he ran. Epps had half-expected this dawn attack, but not in force. Rifle fire was suddenly a heavy pattern around the willows, and a horse screamed and fell. Epps remembered the small island in the middle of the river and ran for Captain Forester. He heard now, clearly, the drum of hoofs, tried to count their number, and failed; this was the main war party of Roman Head.

Johnny Hammond had no time for fright. He felt strong arms lift him and carry him across level ground and then downhill. He heard the shots and then a familiar yell. Frozen with fear and wide-awake, he opened his mouth, but sound stuck in his throat and was released in a hollow gasp. Harris said, "Don't be frightened, Johnny," and he heard water splashing beneath him and wet sand sucking at Harris' boots. All around him was a confused jumble of shouting and horses galloping and yells growing more distant. Harris laid him flat on night-dampened sand, and he squirmed up from the blankets and looked around in the grey light of rising dawn.

Harris called, "Get down, Johnny!"
"Mary," Johnny yelled. "Mary!"

"Mary," Johnny yelled. "Mary!" "Right beside you," Harris cried. "Keep your head down, Johnny. You're all right, son."

He was on a small sand-bar island in the middle of the river. He saw one cottonwood tree and a thin copse of willows, the only cover on the island. He fought back the terror as he watched Captain Forester, knee-deep in water, shouting commands from midchannel, and he saw the men whipping their horses onto the island. Each man tied his horse to a willow bush, dropped low on the sand, and started to dig a hole. He watched Captain Forester and Lieutenant Payne, with ten other men, walking backwards toward the island and firing at the bank and the slope beyond; and, as he watched, one of the men stumbled and fell. He saw the pack mules running wild and had his first close look at Indians. And then Captain Forester and the backward-walking men were on the island, and the captain knelt beside him and began throwing sand with both hands, and said sharply: "Dig, Johnny. Dig yourself a hole!

Johnny Hammond dug like a gopher in the soft sand. Horses were plunging and dropping dead. Captain Forester shouted, "Shoot the horses and use them for cover!'

His sister called from the hole Harris had helped her dig, "Will they kill us, Captain?'

"Of course not," Captain Forester answered cheerily. "We have a little surprise for them if they try it. Stay down, Miss Hammond."

Captain Forester did not tell Johnny what the surprise was; if Johnny had known more about rifles, it would have been apparent. For Captain Forester's company, while short in numbers, was strong in fire power. Each man had been issued one of the new Spencer seven-shot repeaters; and this was that single factor unreckoned for by Roman Head. This was the unknown quantity which, as the life blood of a man's body keeps replenishing itself from strange depths, gave the power of seven rifles to each man and made them nearly equal to the thousand warriors of Roman Head, who had singleshot rifles and war lances and even bows and arrows.

#### Charge

Roman Head sat his great horse on the western ridgeline and watched his warriors crowd on both banks and pour a withering fire into the island, and he saw the white men's horses plunge and drop dead. This was as he had planned: these whites might be safe for a few hours, but they could not ride away. Nor, he thought, would they walk or crawl. He dispatched scouts to tell the warriors to line the riverbanks and keep up their fire. He would give them the whole morning to kill the small column, and failing in that, he would lead a charge himself.

Lieutenant Payne crossed to the east side of the island in mid-morning and stretched himself beside the captain's sand hole. Payne could see Mary Hammond, ten yards away, and, noting that she was lying in a deep and long hole, with good cover, he dismissed the nagging worry that she might be hurt. Payne had done himself proud in this fight, his first engagement.

"Good work," Captain Forester said. "It's not so bad, once you wet your whistle, George.'

Lieutenant Payne grinned knowingly. "Yes, sir. I was frightened stiff when they hit us, but I seem to be over that stage. Any orders, sir?"

'Not at present," Captain Forester said. "They'll do something soon, Have



MARCH, 1949

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to wait and take the correct action. Ah-" Captain Forester wiped his mouth "-you might talk a while with Miss Hammond."

"Yes, sir," Payne said gravely. "And the boy?"

"Fine," Captain Forester said. "He's over there with Harris."

Payne crawled the ten yards to Mary Hammond's hole and smiled down on her. Her eves were clear, but her fingers were clenched tightly.

"I understand now, Lieutenant," Mary Hammond said. "About the delay

before taking us home."

"I'm sorry," Payne said humbly. "I couldn't tell you last night."

"It's all right," Mary said. "Somehow, this isn't so bad."

"Nothing is so bad," Payne said, "when you can see what you are fighting. I'll have to get back over, Miss Hammond. Call me if you need any-

"Thank you," Mary Hammond said. "I will."

At high noon, the Indians withdrew from the immediate riverbanks and gathered out of rifle shot on the hill to the west. Captain Forester turned to Henry Epps.

"What are they brewing?" Captain Forester asked. "A direct charge?"

"I reckon," Epps said. "He don't want to waste time. Figures he can wipe us out."

"Good," Captain Forester said. "I'll place all but ten men on the west side. We'll give Roman Head an unexpected greeting."

When the council on the hillton broke up, the majority of warriors returned to the riverbanks and began their persistent shooting; there remained on the forward slope of the hill some three hundred warriors, the youngest and best of the war party. Johnny Hammond, poking his head up from the hole he lay in, watched them swing out and form a long line, with Roman Head in front of this line on his great red horse. Johnny felt his throat get tight, but he could not duck down or close his eyes. He had to see this.

Roman Head raised one arm and dropped it quickly. The line of warriors walked their horses down the slope and, gaining the flat river bottom, lifted this deliberate pace to a trot. Two hundred yards from the riverbank, Roman Head shouted and the trot broke into the full running charge of the plains Indian, with its sound and fury and flashing of color radiating savagely from the running line of horses. Johnny Hammond wondered how Captain Forester and fifty men could stop all those warriors from riding straight through the shallow water and across the island. He watched and could not close his eyes.

Captain Forester called. "Fire on my command!" and waited patiently behind a dead horse.

They reached the grass fifty feet up from the bank and the ground shook beneath their hoofs; and in one eyeclosing they were on the bank and plunging into the river. Captain Forester shouted, "Fire!" and shot, and shouted again, "Fire!" and waited two breaths and again called, "Fire!" and then levered his Spencer and roared, "Pour it in!" and abandoned his cool logic and gave himself to battle.

Henry Epps fired rapidly and straight, and watched the line of warriors melt away before this unceasing rifle fire. He wondered what Roman Head must be thinking at this time, plunging squarely into the face of rifle fire completely out of proportion to the number of men on the island. Epps saw the charge break, stop, and recoil up the bank and away from the river.

Captain Forester called, "Henry!" and Epps turned and saw the captain lying on his side, slitting his own right trouser leg and sopping up the spreading blood with his free hand. Epps saw two other dead men on the line, and one man shot in the chest. He got up and ran, bent over, to the captain. Captain Forester said, "A little water would help, Henry. Miss Hammond has my canteen."

Epps said, "We got Roman Head, Captain.'

I know," Captain Forester said tightly. "I saw him go down. The horse was killed at the same moment. Pull

this trouser leg apart, Henry."

"Where is it?" Epps asked.

"Upper leg," Captain Forester said.

"A light ball, half spent, I believe. Wash it off, Henry, and I'll take a look.

Epps poured water on the bared leg and watched Captain Forester spread the opening with his thumbs, probe with a forefinger, and produce a knife from the sheath inside his shirt. Epps said, "Let me get Harris, Captain," but Captain Forester shook his head and murmured, "Harris is needed on the line." Then he tested the knife on his tongue and went to work. Epps poured more water and held the opening with his own thumbs while Captain Forester inserted the slender knife blade, probed a moment, struck a solid object, and swore harshly. After a minute of moving and probing, he popped the misshapen ball from his leg.

"Not a full shot," Captain Forester said. "Pour a thimble of brandy in the wound, Henry. That will do for now.'

Epps took a flask, measured a capful and poured it into the bloody opening Captain Forester gasped and turned white. "Never was a stoic," he mur. mured, and lay back while Epps band aged the wound with a strip of shirt.

"What now?" Epps asked.

"It remains to be seen," Gaptain Forester said thinly. "They'll hold council. Spread the men around again, Henry, and tell Payne to count casualties and report to me."

"That Roman Head," Epps said.
"There was a man."

"Can they do better than that, Henry?" Captain Forester asked.

"I say no," Epps said. "Twenty years I've been out here, and I never saw them press a charge this far."

"Then we've got them," Captain Forester said, and added, thinking of Colonel Adams, "maybe."

On the north fork of the Yellow River, Colonel Adams re-formed his battalion after their third brush in as many hours with fast-riding warriors who rode down from the hills and made their wide dash around the column, firing from behind their horses and sending yells of defiance across the plain. Colonel Adams was not certain about the size of the attacking war party, and being a cautious and saving man, kept tight rein on his force and waited for a decisive move on the enemy's part-or a withdrawal that would give him time to send out scouts and determine what he faced. He did not like this skirmishing, and he wondered how Forester was making out.

#### "Get a Man Through"

Johnny Hammond saw Henry Epps help Captain Forester across the island to the captain's hole. Johnny could see the torn trouser leg and the bandage around the captain's white thigh, and then he looked around and saw other men bending over their friends, and Harris was moving along the line, stopping and working and moving on again; and Johnny Hammond knew the charge had not been stopped without cost. His sister looked up from her hole and bit her lips, and then called to Captain Forester, "Can I help?"

Captain Forester rolled on his good leg and gave her a quick, warm smile. "No," he said. "Not yet, Miss Hammond. You stay right where you are Johnny, you get down there!'

Johnny Hammond said, "Yes, sir," and ducked back in his hole, and then the firing started from both banks as the warriors crept through the long grass and laid their curtain of shot across the island while other warrion pulled their dead from the west bank Johnny was hungry and thirsty, and when afternoon waned and night dropped slowly over the land and the firing fell away to a sullen, irregular mutter in the darkness, he realized that food was scarce on the island. He remembered how the pack mules had bolted up the slope to be turned and captured by the Indians, and with the pack mules had disappeared all provisions.

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Strange sounds filled the night. There were five dead men on the island and seven wounded, and two of the wounded men were unconscious and groaning. A night bird cried once, far above the river, and flew away; and Johnny Hammond looked at the deep blue sky and white stars blinking far away and remembered his home in Illinois.

He discovered that night about food. If he wanted to eat, he would eat horse meat and wash it down with river water. Henry Epps dug a deep hole in the center of the island, beside the cottonwood tree, and in the bottom of this hole he built a tiny fire on which he roasted the best cuts of meat from an Indian pony shot when it bolted onto the island. Johnny Hammond shook his head when Harris brought him a piece of horse meat, and his sister murmured, "Not yet, please," and drank from the captain's canteen. Harris offered his canteen and Johnny Hammond took a big drink.

"Feel better?" Harris asked.

Johnny Hammond said, "We'll never get home now. How can we get away from so many Indians?"

"Don't worry," Harris said. "They can't get us, Johnny, and we'll have re-inforcements in a day or two."

"You ain't soldiers," Johnny said.
"Why did you come so far out and let the Indians catch you?"

"We're not soldiers," Harris admitted. "But we're citizens, Johnny."

"What do you want out here?" Johnny Hammond asked.

"We live in this land," Harris said.
"Some of our friends have been killed by the Indians, just like your friends in the wagon train. We came to teach the Indians a lesson."

"Don't you want to go home?" Johnny Hammond asked.

"When we finish our job," Harris said.

Johnny Hammond wrestled with many hazy questions and said, "Then you never had to come?"

"No," Harris said. "We volunteered. There weren't enough soldiers and the colonel needed our help."

Johnny Hammond made no sense of this. He said, "Dad told me it was foolish doin' something you had no business doin'." "Johnny," Harris said softly. "Remember this is your country, too, just like it is our country, me and my friends. In a way, we are doing this for our country."

Harris got to his knees, took a bite of horse meat, and disappeared in the darkness.

Two of the wounded men died during the night, and that left forty-four men, less five wounded, making a total of thirty-nine able-bodied fighters. Captain Forester did not sleep the first night on the island. He lay on the sand with his wounded leg stretched out before him and worried about Colonel Adams and whether the colonel would understand upon reaching their planned rendezvous the next day and would continue south with all possible speed. The colonel might be fighting against a delaying war party; and this thought was more than enough to make the captain take immediate action.

"Henry," Captain Forester said, late that night, "can we get a man through?"

"A long chance," Epps said. "And tough for any man, on foot."

"Did you count the warriors in this party?" Captain Forester said. "I didn't see a thousand."

"No," Epps agreed soberly. "About three hundred or so shy. Maybe they got tired of scalping and went home."

"Or northeast," Captain Forester said. "Henry, we can hold out a good while, with some luck and horse meat, but we've got to send a man through if we can."

"I'll go," Epps said.

"No. Not yet. I need you. Do you know a man?"

Epps said, "I know one. Any particular orders to him?"

Captain Forester said, "The men all know our situation. Tell him to get through to Adams. That's all."

#### A Man Can Do a Lot of Things

The chiefs gathered beyond the west ridge in council and counted their dead and sat in silence, listening to the wailing squaws. The chiefs stirred and spoke in turn; they agreed to lay siege to the island and take, in time, with sun and starvation helping, every scalp on the island in payment for the death of their warriors and their chief. They knew, now, that the men on the island were armed with new rifles which spoke many times without reloading. And for this reason they vetoed another charge as a waste of lives. They would surround the island and watch closely for any man slipping out at night, and when word came from the northeast, from the war party delaying the larger column, they would know how much time they had. But they were implacable in one thing: no one would walk away from that island.

Johnny Hammond said, "I can't eat no more, sir. It makes me sick."

"You did very well," Captain Forester said.

"They're still eating," Johnny said.
"They must be hungry."

Captain Forester moved his leg and felt sharp pain. "We have strong stomachs, Johnny. A man can do a lot of things when he has to."

This was on the second night, following a quiet day of heat and lying behind the horses, waiting for something to happen. And nothing happened. Unless a man showed his head, his leg, his hand.

"I never want to see a horse again," Johnny said. "It makes me feel funny to my stomach."

Captain Forester lay on his good leg and stared about his circle of defense. Another day, he thought, and the war party could take them without trouble if they made one more charge. But the charge would not come; he was certain of that. And just before sundown a lone warrior had ridden past the island, fifty yards back from the bank, waving something black and stringy on his lance. Captain Forester saw this object and looked at Henry Epps, and knew they would have to send another man out tonight.

They had lost another wounded man on this second day, and one other man was killed by a falling arrow. That left thirty-six fighting men.

Payne watched Mary Hammond eat a piece of horse meat and remembered her face only a night ago when she had refused a similar piece. Mary ate slowly, chewing the meat thoroughly and swallowing with apparent difficulty—

#### Crossword Puzzle Answer



Sure, you can turn this upside down if you want to. But why peek and spail your fun?
Puzzle is on inside back cover of this issue.

but eating. Payne decided she had more courage than any girl he had known; she was showing her breeding in the face of odds far beyond the expected strength of any woman. He wondered, then, about her breeding, her ancestors, and what his parents would think of this slender, white-faced

"Aren't you hungry?" Mary Hammond asked.

"Oh," Payne grinned. "I was think-

"About what?"

"You," Payne said. "I was thinking

you are a brave girl.

Ten vards away, Captain Forester smiled to himself and waited for Henry Epps, and when Epps came to his hole, the captain said:

"We'll have to try again, Henry. Tonight, and the next night, until we get

a man through.'

"I'll go," Epps said. "Now look, Captain. Don't start giving orders. I'm goin'. I've cooked enough horse meat to last all of you a week. If I ain't back with the colonel in three days, send somebody else."
"Very well," Captain Forester said.
"Good luck, Henry."

#### You Can't Go Back

Johnny Hammond lost the thread of passing time on the third day. The sun was too hot and he was hungry and thirsty, and his stomach seemed to shrink every hour. His sister did not move from her hole, and he crawled over once and looked down on her and saw the dried tears on her cheeks and the thinness of her body. After that, Johnny Hammond sat in his hole and wondered why people were so foolish as to come way out here and get killed. He could think about his mother and father now and hold back the tears, and it was good to remember them.

He remembered the farm and a jug of sugar water in the corner of the big field and the smell of hay in the barn loft, and apples on the trees, and eating cherry pie in the kitchen. He remem-bered the pigeons and robins and meadowlarks, and how the grass turned green in spring beside the creek. He remembered the storm cellar filled with crocks of butter and cream and jars of fruit preserves; and most of all, in midday, he remembered the taste of water drawn from the well in the oak bucket and the coolness of the spring along the bluffs north of the house. And then he had a strange and disquieting thought: the water in the pool, where the wagon train had camped that night, had been just as cold as the water back home. He considered this, and when Harris came to him, he asked his question.

Harris swallowed and coughed thickly, and said, "Everything is good, Johnny, if you use it or see it in the right way. That spring is cold, like your well back home. Did you ever stop and think, Johnny, that all of these men came from back there? All of them drank from wells and ate cherry pies in the ripe time and smelled the hay and the fields."

Johnny wondered how Harris knew he had thought about cherry pies and hay and well water. He said, "It was pretty cold. It sure tasted good that night."

"And it will taste good again," Harris said. "All of us came out here, Johnny, and found cold water and the same smell of hav and cherries and smoked hams. And those same things are just as good in Oregon as they are in Illinois. It's all our country, Johnny, and all of it is good. You just have to look at it right, and feel right, and go on living. You can't go back, Johnny. You're a man now, and you can't be a little boy again. You think about that, Johnny.'

#### **Cold Water**

Captain Forester touched his leg on the third night and decided it was going to be all right. He was encouraged by this fact, and also by the fact that Epps must have got through the line of warriors. Harris brought a piece of horse meat from the fire hole, and the captain chewed it slowly.

"How are the other wounded?" Cap-

tain Forester asked.

"Feeling better," Harris said. "And

so are you, Captain."

"Too mean to die," Captain Forester chuckled. "Make the rounds again, Harris, and be sure every man is on guard.'

"I will," Harris said soberly. "Lieutenant Payne is coming around right

Captain Forester chuckled again, and murmured, "The places you find young love, Harris!"

"Like ragweed," Harris said. "It flourishes anywhere."

On the fourth day, Johnny lay in his hole and watched the sun climb, hang, and drop away to the west; and night closed and he ate horse meat and drank river water and listened to his sister talk with Lieutenant Payne, noting that she called him George and he called her Mary. He slept fitfully the fourth night, and the fifth day came with a burning sun and the fifth night was hazy, for the meat was getting very "ripe" as Harris called it. He dreamed of home, but the dream was shot through with another of spring water and his father walking steadily beside their wagon, heading west. He fought up from this dream in the early moning, waiting for the expected shots and the smell and the sun; but the valley was quiet with a new stillness.

Captain Forester woke on that sixth morning with Payne's hand on his arm He sat up, saying, "What is it? A charge?

"Look, sir," Payne said huskily,

Captain Forester said, "Adams?" and Payne nodded and pointed north. Cap. tain Forester raised himself a little far. ther and looked to the north in time to see the advance point of the battalion racing from the distant hills and debouching into the valley of the Yellow and sweeping down the river toward them. Captain Forester looked around him and saw his men standing erect for the first time in six days, waving their rifles and shouting hoarsely.

Captain Forester said, "Fire a rifle." Harris raised his Spencer and worked the lever, firing seven shots into the sky. Captain Forester said, "Lieutenant Payne, have the men fall in. Harris. bring the boy and girl over here."

Johnny Hammond came at Harris' call, helping his sister, and stood beside the captain, watching the advance point closing on the last five hundred yards from the island. Johnny Hammond looked at the valley, at the hills, and said, "Where did they go?"

Captain Forester smiled weakly and said, "They went away, Johnny. We

licked them-this time."

Captain Forester sat with his back against the rampart composed of his dead horse and packed sand, and watched Lieutenant Payne line the men up before him, and then cross to his side and smile broadly at Mary Hammond. Harris saw Henry Epps riding at the front of the advance point and grinned broadly. Then he turned to Johnny Hammond.

"It wasn't so bad, was it?"

"Not so bad," Johnny Hammond said cautiously. "Do you think I could get to Oregon after we-?" He felt funny, asking that question, but knowing why, watching the line of scarecrows standing before the captain, waiting for the battalion.

'Why, sure," Harris said quietly. ¶ think you can, Johnny. But first we'll go back to the post and eat a while and drink some good water. And say, we can get water at the spring on the way.

"Sure we can," Johnny said. "I'll bet it's mighty cold."



## What Do You Remember?

#### A Quiz Based on the Contents of This Issue

#### Truth and Consequence

These questions will focus your attention on crucial points in Jerome Brondfield's short short story, "Transfer Point," and Olive McHugh's advice to the would-be writer for radio. Do you have a firm grasp of the points these two authors considered essential? Test yourself by marking the following statements true or false.

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- \_1. Jane Willis wanted a daughter so much that she neglected her son, Bill.
- 2. If the meaning of Bill's kiss could be put into words, it would say, "Mother, now I'll protect you."
- 3. Bill's chief claim to distinction is summed up in his mother's last words, "Handsomest man at the dance."

#### So You Want to Write for Radio?

- \_4. The radio writer should inject suspense and conflict into the opening speeches of his script.
- 5. The surest and simplest device for accomplishing transitions is to use a narrator.
- \_6. The speech, "Henry! Come out from under that bed, illustrates another type of transition.

#### The Snow Girl

To many of us-sheltered Americans who never saw first hand the personal tragedy that World War II brought to millions of Europe's children-the point of this story might seem a trifle obscure. These questions will help to clarify the point and prepare you for further classroom discussion.

What is the urgent question in the narrator's mind as he purchases the doll? What incident brings the Captain to Mireille's house in Corsica? Contrast the Captain's first impression of Mireille and the one he receives at the party given by his squadron for Mireille and her brothers. Why is the Captain so disturbed when he goes to fetch Mireille's coat? And afterwards, during the jeep ride home? Why is his leavetaking so abrupt? On his way back to the States the Captain decides to fly over Mireille's home. Why? Explain the last words of this story: "I was free." Was the Captain in love with Mireille? Or did he simply feel a tremendous responsibility for her? Give reasons for your answer. Now do you understand why the purchase of the second doll and its safe shipment to Corsica were so important to the Captain? Explain.

#### Is She Skinny, Thin, or Svelte?

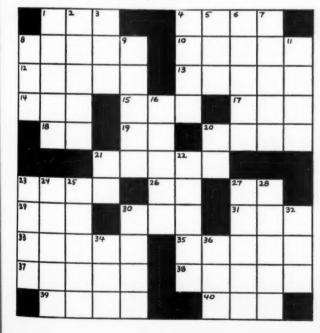
Write R opposite statements referring to facts observable in the external world, E opposite statements expressing feelings.

- \_\_1. You can't tell what she looks like under all that war
- 2. My nephew George was born on February 2, 1947.
- \_\_3. He reminds me of Gregory Peck, Alan Ladd, and Montgomery Clift, all tied up in one neat package.
- 4. I'm just an old-fashioned girl.
- \_5. Promptly at 2:30, the President entered the Senate chamber.

Answers in Teacher Lesson Plan

#### Are You a Jack of All Sports?

• There are 48 words in this puzzle. The words starred with an asterisk (\*) all relate to the same subject-sports and games. See how many of these starred words you can get. Allow yourself three points for each starred word (there are 27) and one point for each of the others. If you get all the words, you'll have a score of 102. Answers are on page 31, but don't look now. Why spoil your fun?



#### **ACROSS**

- 1. However.
- \*4. Bridge: when a side wins 12 or 13 tricks
- Section of a wall. \*10. Baseball: a ball hit out
- of the park.
- Bowling: the ball goes down the
- 13. "\_\_\_\_ with me."

  14. A favorite snow sport require: two of these.
- 15. Insane.
- Girl's name.
- 18. Abbrev. for "street."
  19. Abbrev. for "Proportion-
- al Representation.
- °20. Game played by men mounted on ponies.
  °21. Called the "oldest game in the world."
- °23. Recreation: a favorite of Boy Scouts. \*26. Baseball: Abbrev. for
- "National League." Abbrev. for "Senior."
- Girl's name.
- °30. \_alai: Basque game. °31. Golf: prescribed strokes for each hole.
  °33. Baseball: when pitcher
- goes 9 innings, he goes
- °35. Tennis: three points or more apiece.
- Swimmi.g: plunges into the water.
- °38. Baseball: Made error.
- Indentation.
- °40. Football: A lineman.

#### DOWN

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- \* 1. Baseball: False motions by pitchers. 2. Not lighted.
- \* 3. Golf: Small cone used in driving.
- 4. Fish whose roe is a favorite.
- 5. Tennis: slow, high passing stroke.
- 6. Basic compound formed from ammonia.
- 7. This is awarded in track meets.
- 8. Dance step.
- 9. Important body fluid.
- °11. City in Nevada.
- \*16. Place where sports contests go on.
- 20. Abbrev. for "Postscript." 21. Abbrev. for "candle
- power. \*22. Baseball: hit the dirt to
- avoid being tagged out. \*23. Baseball: member of the St. Louis National League team.
- 24. Shun.
- 25. Delicate lilac color.
- 27. Reject with contempt.
- •28. Track: ran in a sprint.
- 30. A joke.
- °32. Baseball: Member of Cincinnati team.
- \*34. Football: Big \_\_\_ conference of midwestern colleges.
- 36. Poetic for before.

## Chucklebait 3

There isn't one of us who doesn't envy the fellow who is sharp enough and quick enough to demolish an adversary with a flip phrase or a neatly packaged paragraph. Among the verbal duelists of our time, top honors probably go to Winston Churchill. The House of Commons and the air waves of the world have echoed quips that will stand in history side by side with "blood, sweat, and tears." Most famous of the Churchillisms, perhaps, is the remark made of Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps. Churchill was watching Sir Stafford cross the floor of the House. "There but for the Grace of God," he quipped, "goes God." Prime Minister Clement Attlee was described by Churchill as "A sheep in sheep's clothing."

Of Ramsay MacDonald, Churchill recalled: "More than any other man he had the gift of compressing the largest amount of words into the smallest amount of thought." The grammar here drops just outside the first base foul line, but who are we to quibble?

Early in his career, Churchill demolished an opponent with a deft description: "He can best be described as one of those orators who, before they get up, do not know what they are going to say; when they are speaking, do not know what they are saying; and when they have sat down, do not know what they have said."

#### The Gentleman Disagrees

Our House of Representatives, too, has echoed caustic cracks. Perhaps the most celebrated is one made by Tom Reed when he was Speaker. A representative from Illinois closed a speech with the statement: "Like Henry Clay I would rather be right than be President." Reed remarked, "The gentleman from Illinois need not be alarmed. He will



never be either." It was Tom Reed, incidentally, who said that a statesman is a dead politician.

Of all the varieties of humor, however, repartee is perhaps most prized. We like to hear an offending remark, a defi, parried by a repartee which goes the original offens one better. In this class is the story of the Chinese dignitary who was traveling from New York to Washington in a day coach, sitting with a gentleman distinguished by his ball breeding. The Chinese was asked, "Say, what 'ese' are you' Chinese or Japanese?" The offended diplomat parried with "May I inquire what 'key' are you, Yankee or monkey?"

In the French National Assembly, a member who is a veterinarian by profession had just finished his maided speech. Another member asked him sarcastically, "Is it true that you are a veterinarian by profession?" The reply came like a shot, "Yes, are you ill?"

Th courtroom, too, is frequently the scene of witty repartee. A lawyer was being interrupted constantly by a judg unfriendly to his side. The attorney's patience was beginning to fray. "Are you showing your contempt for the court?" asked the judge. "No, your Honor," the lawyer applied, "I'm doing my best to conceal it."

#### Figaro, Figaro, Figaro . . .

The Italian composer Rossini is best known today for his opera *The Barber of Seville*. But he is also remembered a wit. Once a young composer who had written a notorously bad piece of music impugned Rossini's critical intelligence. The master replied, "Well, really, I find much your music that is good and also much that is new." To young composer was beginning to feel mollified when Rosini continued, "Only, what is good is mostly not new and what is new is mostly not good."

After the opening of a new opera, a social climber gushed to Rossini, "Maestro, do you remember that famous dinner given you in Milan, when they served a gigantic macaron pie? Well, I was seated next to you." "So!" replied Rossini, who was inordinately fond of good food and looked it. I remember the macaroni perfectly, but I fail to recognize you."

Writers, as you may suspect, are hardly amateurs at witty repartee. The stories we could tell are almost legion. The best of them, to our mind, is one concerning a dabbler in prose so "modern" as to be practically unintelligible. The modernist was being raked over the coals by an author of best sellers whose annual royalties are a source of delight to the Internal Revenue Bureau. The scorched victim finally made what he thought was a telling thrust. He preened and said, "You write for money only, while I write for honor," "Well," the best-selling author replied quietly, "each of us writes for what he needs most."